In The Matter Of: Griffin vs. City of Atlanta

> Deposition Of: **Donald Vickers**

> > Taken On: 10/21/2020

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## IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT COUNTY ATLANTA DIVISION

TYLER GRIFFIN,

Plaintiff,

v.

CIVIL ACTION FILE NO. 1:20-cv-02514-TWT

CITY OF ATLANTA, DONALD VICKERS, MATTHEW ABAD, AND JOHN DOE #1-5,

Defendants.

DEPOSITION CONDUCTED VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF DONALD VICKERS

October 21, 2020 11:00 a.m. ET

Witness located in Atlanta, Georgia

By Jennifer Davis-McLain, RMR, CRR, CRC Certified Court Reporter, License No. 2496

**Donald Vickers** 

1	REMOTE APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL:
2	On behalf of the Plaintiff:
3	MATTHEW R. KAHN, ESQUIRE MORGAN LYNDALL, ESQUIRE
4	THOMAS GIANNOTTI, ESQUIRE  Butler Law Firm
5	10 Lenox Pointe NE
6	Atlanta, Georgia 30324 404.587.8423
7	<pre>matt@butlerfirm.com morgan@butlerfirm.com tom@butlerfirm.com</pre>
8	On behalf of the Defendants:
9	
10	STACI MILLER, ESQUIRE ALISHA MARIE S. NAIR, ESQUIRE
11	JACQUITA PARKS, ESQUIRE City of Atlanta Law Department
12	55 Trinity Avenue SW Suite 5000
13	Atlanta, Georgia 30303 404.330.6402
14	sjmiller@atlantaga.gov amnair@atlantaga.gov
15	japarks@atlantaga.gov
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	(Pursuant to Article 10(B) of the Rules and
23	Regulations of the Georgia Board of Court Reporting, a written disclosure statement was submitted by the
24	court reporter to all counsel present at the proceeding.)
25	

Donald Vickers

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**Donald Vickers** 

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13	(Plaintiff's exhibits were marked
14	electronically prior to the deposition. Defendants' exhibits were marked electronically after the
15	deposition.)
16	
17	
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24	
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PROCEEDINGS

MR. KAHN: So this will be the deposition of
Defendant Donald Vickers taken pursuant to notice and
agreement. The deposition is taken in the case Tyler
Griffin versus the City of Atlanta. The deposition
will be taken pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil
Procedure and all purposes permitted under the rules,
including use at trial. The deposition is being taken
on Zoom because of the COVID pandemic.

Madam Court Reporter, will you please swear in the witness.

COURT REPORTER: Yes, sir. Before I do, I must ask counsel to please introduce yourself and state on the record that you have no objection to this officer of the court administering a binding oath to this witness via Zoom. If we can please begin with the noticing attorney.

MR. KAHN: Sure. This is Matt Kahn from
Butler Law Firm for the plaintiff, and with me I have
Tom Giannotti and Morgan Lyndall from our office, and
there is no objection.

MS. MILLER: Staci Miller for the defendants, and there is no objection.

MS. NAIR: Good morning. Alisha Marie Nair for the City of Atlanta, Officer Vickers, and

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 Officer Abad. There are no objections. 2 MS. PARKS: Good morning. Jacquita Parks. 3 City of Atlanta. No objections. 4 COURT REPORTER: Thank you. 5 DONALD VICKERS, 6 having been first duly sworn, was examined and 7 testified as follows: 8 EXAMINATION BY MR. KAHN: 9 10 All right. Good morning, Officer Vickers. Q. 11 My name is Matt Kahn, as you just heard. I represent 12 Tyler Griffin. 13 I just want to start by asking if you've had your deposition taken before. 14 15 I had a deposition where I was a witness. Α. 16 Ο. As a witness. 17 So you -- have you ever given one as a party to a -- to a lawsuit? 18 Not that I know of. I don't know what --19 Α. 20 I -- to be honest, it was so long ago I don't know what it was about. So --21 22 Q. Okay. Fair enough. 23 I guess I'll just give you some brief ground 24 rules and sort of tell you what this is about. 25 going to ask -- be asking you questions. I'll show

1	you some pictures and some videos. I'd just ask that	
2	if you don't understand my question or you can't hear	
3	me or, you know, I lag or something, just let me know,	
4	and I'll rephrase the question and reask it.	
5	If you if you need to take a break, just	
6	let me know. You know, we can just pause this	
7	deposition and take a quick break if we need to. I'd	
8	just ask if there's a question pending, you answer	
9	that question before we take a break.	
10	And just because we're in different places,	
11	it's a little harder to, you know, speak over each	
12	other and everything. So if you could just wait until	
13	I finish the question, even if you know where I'm	
14	going with it. It just creates a cleaner record and	
15	less jumbling of the of the Zoom lines.	
16	So if you could, please state your full name	
17	for the record.	
18	A. My full name is Donald Paul Vickers, Jr.	
19	Q. And, Officer Vickers, where did you grow up?	
20	A. Where did I grow up?	
21	Q. Yes, sir.	
22	A. All over Georgia. I was shuffled around a	
23	lot.	
24	Q. Were you in a military family?	
25	A. Yes, sir.	

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D

10/21/2020

1	Q.	Where did you go to high school?
2	A.	Went to Osborne High School in Marietta.
3	Q.	You play any sports in high school?
4	A.	Off and on. I did play football.
5	Q.	What position did you play when you played
6	football?	
7	A.	Safety and special teams.
8	Q.	So you did a lot of tackling when you played
9	football?	
10	A.	I did.
11	Q.	Do you have a college degree, sir?
12	A.	No, sir, I do not.
13	Q.	Have you ever served in the military?
14	A.	Briefly.
15	Q.	And what branch did you serve?
16	A.	Marine Corps.
17	Q.	Thank you for your service, sir.
18		Were you discharged from the Marines?
19	A.	You broke up. The question was was I
20	discharge	d?
21	Q.	Yes, sir. That was the question.
22	A.	Due to an injury, yes, sir.
23	Q.	And what was the nature of the injury?
24	A.	It was a ankle injury with some hair
25	fractures	•

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. And so were you you were honorably
2	discharged?
3	A. I was. I believe you bring it up with
4	what is it? it was under honorable conditions, yes,
5	sir.
6	Q. Thank you.
7	My next question it alarms some people,
8	but the reason I'm asking is just, you know, if this
9	case goes to a jury trial, we need to pick a jury; we
10	need to make sure that none of your family or, you
11	know, remote cousins or, you know, family members are
12	on the jury.
13	So do you do you have any family members
14	in Georgia above the age of 18?
15	A. I do. If you want me to list them, it would
16	be
17	Q. Yes, please.
18	A I can list them.
19	Q. Yeah. If you don't mind just listing their
20	first and last name and relationship.
21	A. So, briefly, I was adopted. So my adopted
22	family is here. Briefly, Larry Rogers, Holly Winkle,
23	Debra Rogers. Or she just they got divorced. I'm
24	sorry. It's Debra Price now.
25	Q. Other than those three folks, anyone in

Donald Vickers

```
1
    Georgia over the age of 18?
 2
               Not that I know of.
 3
          Ο.
               And, sir, are you -- are you married?
 4
               I am.
          Α.
 5
               Was your wife among the people that you just
          Ο.
     listed?
 6
 7
          Α.
               No. If you want my immediate family, yes, I
 8
    have my wife and my kids. My kids are under 18.
 9
    wife, Laney Vickers.
               And how many -- you said your children are
10
          Q.
11
    under the age of 18?
12
               Yeah.
                      They're toddlers.
          Α.
               Have you ever been in a fistfight either in
13
          Ο.
14
    high school or the military?
15
                             Objection.
               MS. MILLER:
16
               But you can answer.
17
               THE WITNESS: You said I can answer?
18
               MS. MILLER: Yes.
19
               I have.
          Α.
20
    BY MR. KAHN:
21
          Ο.
               How many times have you been in a fistfight?
22
          Α.
               I couldn't --
23
               MS. MILLER: Same --
24
          Α.
               -- tell you.
25
               MS. MILLER: -- objection.
```

Donald Vickers

```
1
               But you can answer.
 2
    BY MR. KAHN:
 3
          Ο.
               Sir?
 4
               Once again, I couldn't -- I couldn't tell
          Α.
 5
    you how many. I was in mixed martial arts.
                                                   So . . .
 6
          Ο.
               All right. Well, I guess let me modify the
 7
    question, then.
 8
               Outside of organized, you know, fighting
 9
    through a mixed martial arts event, how many
10
    fistfights have you been in?
11
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
12
               But you can answer.
13
               Outside all that, all that I can recall
          Α.
14
    would have been with the City of Atlanta, and I
15
    couldn't tell you how many it would have been.
16
    BY MR. KAHN:
17
               Okay. Would you say that you have a hot
          Q.
18
    temper?
19
                            Objection.
               MS. MILLER:
20
          Α.
               No, sir.
21
               MS. MILLER: But you can answer.
22
    BY MR. KAHN:
23
          Ο.
               I'm sorry.
                           What was --
24
               No, sir.
          Α.
25
          Q.
               -- your answer, sir?
```

1	A. It was "No, sir."
2	Q. Okay. Thank you.
3	And just to just to let you know, like,
4	when if I ask you to clarify an answer, it's not
5	I'm not trying to be rude or provoke you. I just
6	sometimes the Zoom gets jumbled up, and when there's
7	objections, it's hard to hear. So no offense meant by
8	that.
9	Are you currently employ
10	A. I understand.
11	Q. Thank you.
12	Are you currently employed by APD?
13	A. I am.
14	Q. And what's your current job title?
15	A. Senior police officer.
16	Q. And how long have you been with APD?
17	A. Come February, it will be 15 years.
18	February 21st will be 15 years.
19	Q. And of those 15 years, how long have you
20	been an SPO?
21	A. I think it's been I don't think it's been
22	two years.
23	Q. Did you start with APD as a recruit?
24	A. I did.
25	Q. And do you have any law enforcement

**Donald Vickers** 

1	experience	e predating APD?
2	А.	No, sir.
3	Q.	Have you undergone use-of-force training?
4	А.	Yes, sir.
5	Q.	And was SPO Patrick Fite your instructor on
6	use of for	rce?
7	А.	Yes, sir.
8	Q.	Do you know SPO Fite personally?
9	А.	No, sir. I mean, I know him, but not
10	outside w	ork I don't.
11	Q.	Okay. Fair. That's fair.
12		Do you have any DUI training?
13	А.	So as far as the DUI course, no, I've not
14	gone thro	ugh that. It I could say it's the minimum
15	requiremen	nt.
16	Q.	So do you know how to administer a field
17	sobriety	test?
18	А.	No, sir.
19	Q.	Have you ever reported another officer for
20	the use o	f excessive force?
21	А.	No, sir.
22	Q.	Have you ever testified in an official
23	proceeding	g that another officer has used unreasonable
24	force?	
25	А.	No, sir.

1	Q. In your career as a police officer, have you
2	ever seen another officer use what you would consider
3	to be excessive force?
4	A. No, sir. Not physically seen it, no, sir.
5	Q. Okay. Have you heard about it?
6	A. I mean, we hear about it all the time, but
7	I've never witnessed it, you know, physically,
8	personally there, standing there. No, I've never
9	witnessed it.
10	Q. Now, have you you said that you had been
11	deposed a long time ago as a witness. Was that in
12	your capacity as a police officer?
13	A. I was.
14	Q. And was that in a case involving allegations
15	of excessive force?
16	A. I don't remember at all. I to be honest,
17	I think it had something to do with the shooting that
18	happened in the neighborhood. I don't think I
19	don't think it was a use of force. And I
20	Q. Okay.
21	A. It was a it was a contracting job that I
22	used to work; and I guess something happened at the
23	contracting job, and they brought me in.
24	Q. I see. Okay. And have you ever been a
25	party to a lawsuit, either as a plaintiff or a

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta **Donald Vickers** 1 defendant? No, sir. 2 Α. 3 Ο. All right. All right. So excluding any 4 conversations that you had with any of your lawyers 5 from the City of Atlanta, did you do anything to 6 prepare for your deposition today? 7 Α. Other than speaking to my lawyers? I No. 8 don't know what else I could have done. And now, again, you know, there is an 9 O. 10 attorney-client privilege between what you said -- the 11 substance of what you said with your lawyers, and so I 12 don't want to know any of that. But how much time did 13 you spend speaking with your lawyers to get ready for 14 the deposition? 15 I couldn't tell you exact time. I mean, it Α. 16 was -- we met over a couple days, different 17 conversations, phone calls here and there. 18 O. Would you say cumulatively you spent over or 19 under one hour preparing with your lawyers? 20 I'd have to say it's probably over one hour. Α. 21 O. Over or under two hours?

- 22 23
- Α. Close to two hours. I don't -- I don't -and, you know, maybe I'm wrong on that, but I don't --I don't think we spoke longer than that.
- 24

25

Sir, have you reviewed the complaint Q. Sure.

Donald Vickers

```
1
    that was filed in this case?
 2
               I have.
          Α.
 3
          O.
               And do you understand what this case is
 4
    about?
 5
         Α.
               I do.
 6
          O.
               And what's your understanding of the case?
 7
         Α.
               I guess you brought me here because you want
 8
    me to tell you -- because you want to -- my
 9
    understanding is you brought me here because you're
10
    not happy with the actions that were taken.
11
          Q.
               Okay. Have you reviewed any of your
12
    discovery responses in this case?
13
          Α.
               Yes.
14
               All right. I'm going to -- I'm going to
          Q.
15
    share my screen with you real quick. Let me -- give
16
    me just a second here.
17
               All right. Can you see Plaintiff's
18
    Exhibit 24 on your screen?
               You said -- okay. I can.
19
         Α.
20
          Ο.
               Okay. Excellent.
21
               Now, have you ever seen this document
22
    before? And I can scroll through it. It's an 11-page
23
    document. So I can -- I'll slowly scroll through it
24
    here.
25
               Is this a document that you've seen?
```

1	A. It appears to be, yes, sir.
2	Q. Is there anything in Plaintiff's Exhibit 24
3	that you that, after reviewing, you feel that you
4	need to correct?
5	A. No, sir.
6	Q. Did you review any of the City of Atlanta's
7	discovery responses in this case?
8	A. Honestly, I can't I don't think I
9	actually reviewed anything.
10	Q. I'm sorry. I couldn't hear what you said.
11	A. I don't think I reviewed anything other than
12	that what you showed me as far as their discovery.
13	Q. Okay. Did you watch any of the body camera
14	footage from this case?
15	A. I did.
16	Q. And have you seen the body camera footage
17	where you tackled Mr. Griffin?
18	A. I did.
19	Q. And when was the last time that you watched
20	it?
21	A. I remember only watching the whole video one
22	time. It was, like, three separate videos. I think
23	it was, like, two weeks ago.
24	Q. I'm sorry. You said two weeks ago?
25	A. I believe it was two weeks ago. It might

Gri	ffin vs.	. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers Exhibit D 10/21/20
	1	have it might have been I would say it was
	2	somewhere between a week and a half and two weeks ago.
	3	Q. Okay. Have you seen the body camera footage
	4	showing you and Abad, Officer Abad, making Mr. Griffin
	5	walk around on a broken ankle?
	6	MS. MILLER: Objection.
	7	But you can answer.
	8	A. I don't remember seeing Mr. Griffin walking
	9	on a broken ankle.
1	0	BY MR. KAHN:
1	1	Q. Did you review any of APD's standard
1	2	operating procedures to get ready for the deposition?
1	3	A. No, sir.
1	4	Q. Besides your attorneys, did you speak with
1	.5	anyone about this deposition?
1	6	A. Mentioned it with my family members, but
1	7	that's it.
1	8	Q. Which members of your family did you speak
1	9	to?
2	0	A. My wife.
2	1	Q. Did you speak with Abad at all?
2	2	A. We talked a little bit here and there. He
2	3	works on another unit now; so, you know, every once in
2	4	a while I'll touch base. I mean, we're friends.

Q.

25

Did you specifically have any conversations

Griffin v	rs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers 10/21/202
1	about the case within the last week with Abad?
2	A. I think I spoke to him last time I spoke
3	to Abad was last, I think, Thursday.
4	Q. What did y'all talk about?
5	A. Work, a little bit about the case. That's
6	it.
7	Q. What about the case did you speak about?
8	A. I don't know. Just pretty much if he has
9	heard anything from the City, you know, if I heard
10	anything from the City, what's going on, you know, as
11	far as the investigation.
12	Q. All right. In the in the early morning
13	of April 5th, 2019, what was your assignment? And
14	what I mean by that is just, like, sort of what were
15	you doing in the in the area.
16	A. It's a little distorted, but you're asking
17	what I was doing April 6th early in the morning as far
18	as work?
19	Q. Yes, sir. And April 5th.
20	A. Okay. Excuse me. That day we were on a
21	we were assigned to a FIT unit. Me and Abad were
22	working together. We were trying to cut down on some
23	of the burglaries and thefts in the area. And so we

25

were going from one hot location to another that we

like to investigate or run surveillance on.

Griffin	vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers 10/21/2
1	Q. Does patrolling for burglaries generally
2	include making traffic stops?
3	A. We were in an unmarked car. There's if
4	we were going to make a traffic stop or had a vehicle
5	that we wanted to pull over, we would ask for a unit,
6	a marked unit, to pull that vehicle over.
7	Q. Did you ask for a marked unit to pull
8	Mr. Griffin's car over?
9	A. We were trying to before he fled, but he
10	ended up wrecking the car before the units could pull
11	him over.
12	Q. You said he wrecked the car before the unit
13	could pull him over?
14	A. He drove off of a retaining wall in
15	somebody's backyard before we could get a unit there
16	to pull somebody to pull him over.
17	Q. Okay. We'll get and we'll get to that in
18	a minute.
19	Do you never mind.
20	I guess why don't you just tell me your side
21	of the story. What did what happened that night?
22	A. From the beginning, like I said, we were on
23	patrol going from one location to another like to

25

though we were in marked clothing, APD state-approved

investigate. We were in an unmarked vehicle, even

clothing. As -- I was driving. Abad was the passenger.

I made a left off Howell Mill onto

Chattahoochee Boulevard. I believe it's -- I believe

it's Boulevard. No. Chattahoochee Ave. When I made

the right turn, got down to -- close to the bridge,

that's when I noticed the car driving in my lane,

coming at me head-on. I had just enough time to

swerve.

And then we turned around, got behind the vehicle. And we were trying to get a unit to respond and let the zone know what was going on. And we were also trying to figure out -- he -- once he got to Howell Mill, he went the wrong way. He went up a one-way street. He was supposed to make a right or left and he chose to go straight up a one-way street.

Once he makes those -- once he went up the one-way street, I don't know those street names. I know the location. I know the routes, but I don't know the street names.

So we were trying to give radio our location and get a unit there and let everybody there know what he was doing -- or the driver was doing. We didn't know who it was at the time. He made another left turn, and I briefly lost sight of him.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

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16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

10/21/2020

And when I got down to the intersection, or close to it, trying to see if he went right or left, we realized, once again, he went straight and drove off a retaining wall and had landed in somebody's backyard.

At that point, Abad jumped out of the passenger seat and ran down towards the vehicle. Ι got out and tried to look at the road sign at the intersection to give radio our location. Once I could hear they had our location, I went to assist.

While I was doing that, I could hear Abad giving commands, loud verbal commands. "Get out of the car. Stop the car. Atlanta Police." I really couldn't see, though. But we had -- we had a vehicle actually blocking the driveway. The homeowner's vehicle was blocking the driveway.

So I couldn't see. I could only hear and, you know, get a glimpse of the vehicle's lights reflecting off the house and other objects and stuff, because it was raining.

Once I got there, I could see that Abad had the -- had Mr. Griffin out of the car, and I could hear that his -- his tone, his verbal commands, had kind of got back to a normal tone. But I saw that he had his hands on a -- kind of a control hold on

1 Mr. Griffin's shoulder. And I remember seeing Mr. Griffin shove his hand off and telling 2 3 Officer Abad to hold on. 4 At that point, Mr. Griffin had objected --5 you know, was obstructing several times, and then he 6 physically pushed Abad's hand away and I tackled him. 7 And we put him in two pair of handcuffs, because he 8 was -- he was kind of too big to put in one pair 9 without, you know, really forcing it. And once I tackled him, his demeanor changed 10 11 completely, and so did ours. He was arrested. Took 12 several minutes for me to get the homeowner to move the vehicle so we could get Mr. Griffin's vehicle out, 13 14 because it had to be towed. 15 Mr. Griffin landed in a backyard. I don't 16 know how he did it exactly, but he was able to get his 17 vehicle to turn around and -- but he landed in some 18 loose gravel in the -- in a homeowner's backyard. 19 And once Mr. Griffin was out of the car and 20 we went to tow it, we got the homeowner to move his 21 vehicle so we could put Mr. Griffin's vehicle -- just 22 drive it up out of the driveway. 23 So for whatever reason Mr. Griffin -- I 24 think it's because he was on the gas too hard -- I 25 mean, that's the only thing I can think of -- where

1	his tires were spinning in the gravel. That's why he
2	couldn't get out of it. But, once again, he had
3	nowhere to go. He was coming at Abad head-on.
4	And that was pretty much it. He was
5	arrested and taken to Grady detention.
6	Q. Okay. So when you first saw Mr. Griffin,
7	you claim that he almost hit you head-on. Right?
8	A. That's correct.
9	Q. Do you have any evidence to prove that?
10	A. No, sir. I don't think
11	Q. Was there a
12	A there's any evidence to prove that.
13	Q. Was there a dashcam in the vehicle you were
14	driving?
15	A. No, sir.
16	Q. Why not?
17	A. That is a undercover vehicle, and it is not
18	equipped with a dashcam.
19	Q. So the only the only proof that you have
20	is your word. Is that right?
21	A. My word well, let's back up. You the
22	only proof that I had that he was coming at me
23	head-on
24	Q. Yes.
25	A or the whole thing?

Donald Vickers

1	Q. The only the only proof that you have
2	A. Okay.
3	Q that he was coming at you head-on is your
4	word.
5	A. That's and Abad's. That's it.
6	Q. So then the then, I guess, more
7	accurately, the only proof you have is the word of two
8	officers who are being sued in federal court for
9	police brutality. Is that right?
10	MS. MILLER: Objection.
11	But you can answer.
12	A. That's correct.
13	BY MR. KAHN:
14	Q. On the night of the question, you were in an
15	unmarked police car. Is that correct?
16	A. That's correct.
17	Q. And what was the make and model of that
18	vehicle?
19	A. I think it's a Dodge Dart. I don't know the
20	year. I don't even remember the color. I know it was
21	a dark color.
22	Q. Was that vehicle equipped with any police
23	lights?
24	A. No, sir. Once again, it's an undercover
25	vehicle that we were using.

1	Q. Was it did it have one of those one of
2	those little lights that you can put on the top of the
3	car like you see in the movies?
4	A. No, sir.
5	Q. Was the vehicle equipped with a siren or
6	A. No, sir.
7	Q a PA system?
8	A. No, sir.
9	Q. So were there were there any markings on
10	the car that would have allowed Mr. Griffin to know
11	that he was being followed by a police officer?
12	MS. MILLER: Objection.
13	But you can answer.
14	A. No, sir. To be honest, I wasn't even aware
15	if he even knew we were behind him, because he was so
16	far ahead of us.
17	BY MR. KAHN:
18	Q. Why didn't you pull Mr. Griffin over after
19	he allegedly almost hit you head-on?
20	A. We didn't have a unit there to pull him
21	over, and he did he kept going. He blew through
22	the intersection and went up a one-way street. Units
23	were trying to get to us, but by the time the units
24	got there, he had already matter of fact, by the

time the units got there, he was pretty much being

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detained at that point.

Why didn't you wait until the units got there to approach Mr. Griffin?

Donald Vickers

- Because Mr. Griffin was in somebody's Α. backyard unable to leave. He was still trying to flee We got out on foot and made the encounter.
- Q. Well, if he was unable to leave, then why wouldn't you just wait for the police to get there?
- We didn't know if he was going to get out and try to run. We didn't -- we didn't know anything -- we didn't know who the driver was. didn't know if it was a female, male. We didn't know if there was more people in the vehicle.
- And so you said this several times in the Q. police report: claimed that Mr. Griffin drove off of a Is that right? ledge.
  - Α. That's correct.
- Now, did you actually observe Mr. Griffin Ο. drive over any ledge?
- The only thing -- the only way he could have got back there was to drive over a ledge. vehicle -- the homeowner's vehicle was blocking the driveway, and the only way to get Mr. Griffin's vehicle back there is to keep going straight. order to do that, you have to drive over the retaining

```
1
    wall.
 2
               So that -- that's all good. But did you
         Ο.
    actually observe Mr. Griffin drive over any ledge?
 3
 4
               I mean, I guess -- no. I didn't -- I
         Α.
 5
    didn't -- I saw the brake lights. I saw them in the
    backyard. I saw that -- the homeowner had -- it was
6
 7
    solar panel lights, the landscaping lights. They had
8
    been struck by Mr. Griffin's vehicle.
               MR. KAHN: All right. I'll move to strike
9
    that --
10
11
               Once again, the only --
         Α.
12
               MR. KAHN: -- that as --
               -- way to do that --
13
         Α.
14
               MR. KAHN: -- nonresponsive.
15
               -- is to go over that way.
         Α.
16
               MR. KAHN: Move to strike that as
17
    nonresponsive.
18
    BY MR. KAHN:
19
         Q.
               Officer A- -- excuse me.
20
               Officer Vickers, is there any video showing
21
    Mr. Griffin drive off of any ledge?
22
         Α.
              Not that I know of.
23
               So, again, the only proof of that that we
          Ο.
24
    have is your word and Defendant Abad's word. Is that
25
    correct?
```

1	A. And the damages.
2	Q. Is it your position that Mr. Griffin hurt
3	his ankle when he allegedly drove over this ledge?
4	A. No, sir. We don't know how he hurt his
5	ankle. It would not be fair for me to say exactly how
6	he hurt his ankle. I mean, it's
7	Q. How do you
8	A a good possibility.
9	Q. You said it's a good possibility that he
10	hurt his ankle from driving off the ledge?
11	A. Yes, sir.
12	Q. How do how do you personally think that
13	he hurt his ankle?
14	A. I don't think. I don't know, sir.
15	Q. Do you know any of the details of
16	Mr. Griffin's injuries?
17	A. Any I know from what I heard, he or
18	was shown a broken ankle in two spots, two locations.
19	Is that correct? I don't
20	Q. So let me pull up an exhibit for you.
21	Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 30 on your
22	screen?
23	A. I see a portion. Okay.
24	Q. Sir, can you see
25	A. I see where it says 30, but I'm looking at

```
1
 2
               It's a X-ray scan.
          Q.
 3
               Oh, I see it. Okay. Yes, sir.
         Α.
               Okay. Have you ever seen --
 4
          O.
 5
          Α.
               I see it.
 6
          Ο.
               Have you ever seen this X-ray scan of
 7
    Mr. Griffin's ankle after the surgery?
 8
               I think only what was, I think, on the AJC.
         Α.
 9
    I may have seen it before, but I don't recall.
10
               Do you see the ten screws and the metal rod
          Q.
11
    in his ankle?
12
         Α.
               I do.
               And do you really think that driving off of
13
14
    a ledge did that to him?
15
               MS. NAIR: We need to stop for a moment.
16
    Ms. Miller is not on the line.
17
               MR. KAHN:
                          Oh.
               (OFF THE RECORD 11:35-11:38 A.M.)
18
19
               COURT REPORTER: (Reads record.)
20
               MS. MILLER: Thank you. Can I just have the
    exhibit number of that exhibit?
21
22
               MR. KAHN: Yes. It's Plaintiff's
23
    Exhibit 30. And I'm going to share my screen again.
24
               That's the wrong one. Sorry.
25
```

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1
    BY MR. KAHN:
 2
               All right. So, Officer Vickers, can you see
          Ο.
 3
    the -- my screen again, Plaintiff's Exhibit 30?
 4
               I can. Yes, sir, I can.
         Α.
 5
          Ο.
               Okay.
                      Thank you.
 6
               And so the question that was pending before
 7
    we stopped -- I'll just reask it. And that -- okay.
 8
               So the -- so we're looking at Plaintiff's
 9
    Exhibit 30, and my question is is do you really think
10
    that driving off of a ledge did that to Mr. Griffin's
11
    ankle?
12
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
13
               But you can answer.
14
               I think it's very possible.
         Α.
15
    BY MR. KAHN:
16
               And what are your qualifications to opine on
          Ο.
17
    that?
               I don't know if you want to say
18
         Α.
19
    qualifications or experience, but I've seen a lot of
    accidents. They're -- what they can do to a human
20
21
    body is pretty horrific.
22
          Q.
               But you didn't see this accident --
23
          Α.
               I've seen --
24
               -- as you call it, did you?
          Q.
25
               No, I did not physically witness that
         Α.
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## accident.

- So you stayed in the car while Abad Ο. approached Mr. Griffin. Is that right?
- Α. No, sir. I was not in the car. I was outside the car trying to secure the vehicle and looking at our location on the road signs and giving it over radio to -- giving it over to the dispatch so the units could, you know, arrive to where we were at, and then I approached.
- Q. Okay. And you said that there was a car -the homeowner's car was blocking your view to the bottom of the driveway. That's correct? Is that correct?
- A. I think between the hill, the angle of the vehicle, and, yes, the homeowner's car -- I think if the homeowner's car was not there, I'd be able to see pretty much the whole encounter with Abad and the vehicle -- the suspect vehicle.
- Now, at what point after you left your car Ο. did you first see Abad standing by Mr. Griffin's car?
- Α. As I started to approach, coming down the driveway between the car and the house.
- And could you tell me what you -- what you 0. saw when you first saw that?
  - Well, I saw Abad giving -- I saw and heard Α.

1	Abad giving orders for Mr. Griffin to get out of the
2	car. Abad had a control hold on Mr. Griffin, you
3	know. Mr. Griffin swiped Abad's hand away, and then
4	that's when I ran up and tackled him.
5	Q. And, sir, none of that is on video.
6	A. Mr. Griffin was
7	Q. Right?
8	A bigger than Abad.
9	Q. Sir, none of what none of what
10	A. Yes, sir.
11	Q you sorry. None of what you saw was
12	on video. Right?
13	A. If my video didn't catch it, Abad's did.
14	Q. So the first time that we see you on video,
15	though, is on Abad's body cam when you lunge toward
16	Mr. Griffin. Is that right?
17	A. I believe so.
18	Q. Did you have a body cam on your person at
19	the time?
20	A. I did, sir.
21	Q. And why wasn't it activated when you tackled
22	Mr. Griffin?
23	A. For whatever reason, we don't know. I can't
24	answer that. I don't know. I remember as I was
25	running down I can't remember if it was off or it

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just wasn't recording. I just can't recall what was going on with the camera. But once I noticed it, I activated it as quick and best as I could.

- So is there something that you -- that you 0. need to do physically to activate the body camera?
- Α. It has to be turned on. That was an older That was either my second or third camera that I had gone through. The -- for whatever reason, that one was acting up. I don't know if this was a user error or a device malfunction.

But you have to turn it on. Once you turn the camera on, it goes into a buffer mode. While it's in buffering mode, you can tap the center button twice, and it's supposed to record. It will go back about two minutes. And then once it gets to where you hit the button, the audio will kick in.

- And do you claim that you tapped the button Ο. and it just didn't turn on?
- At this point, I don't -- I don't know. Α. Ι honestly don't know. I know that when I seen that it wasn't recording, I did my very best to cut it on as soon as possible.
- Is there a separate button for sound and Ο. audio that you control?
  - No, sir. On that camera there might -- no. Α.

1	You can't control the you can only control the
2	camera will the body-worn camera will beep. But as
3	far as picking up volume, I don't think you can
4	control that.
5	Q. So there's no way if you were if you
6	were wearing that camera that you were wearing on the
7	night in question, there's no way that you could leave
8	the video operational but press a button to turn the
9	sound off while leave the video running.
10	A. No, sir. If there is, I'm not aware of
11	that.
12	Q. Is there a reason that you didn't activate
13	your body camera before you got out of the car like
14	Abad did?
15	A. It I don't I don't know why it wasn't
16	activated, sir.
17	Q. And why there's a two-minute period at
18	the beginning of your body cam video where the sound
19	was turned off. Is that right?
20	A. Okay. If there's that's the buffering
21	part. So, like I said, it's in buffering mode. You
22	want it to record; you hit the button twice. It will
23	go back two minutes. Once it gets to that point after
24	the two minutes where you hit the button, the audio
25	kicks in.

1	Q. I see. At what point did you decide to
2	tackle Mr. Griffin?
3	A. Once he pushed Abad's hand away.
4	Q. And why did you decide to tackle
5	Mr. Griffin?
6	A. He was obstructing Abad and not obeying his
7	commands. And then once you swipe an officer's hands,
8	you become a threat at that point, and I alleviated
9	it.
10	Q. Is there anything else that you could have
11	done to get in there?
12	A. From the distance I was at, I mean Monday
13	night quarterbacking, possibly. I wouldn't want to
14	tase. If I missed, then I would hit Abad possibly
15	hit Abad. So I went for a tackle.
16	Q. Did you know that Mr. Griffin's ankle was
17	hurt after you tackled him?
18	A. Shortly after, yes, sir.
19	Q. How shortly after did you realize that
20	Mr. Griffin's ankle was hurt?
21	A. That, I can't recall.
22	Q. Did you ever call an ambulance to come check
23	on Mr. Griffin?
24	A. It was determined we checked, and it was
25	determined that with him having a hurt ankle and

Griffin	vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers Exhibit D 10/21/20
1	having units already there, I could get him to the
2	hospital quicker by having a unit do the transport.
3	We would have got him quicker got him to Grady
4	quicker and got him out of the rain.
5	Q. So that's a no; you never called an
6	ambulance to check on Mr. Griffin. Is that is that
7	right?
8	A. It no. It was determined that the
9	ambulance was going to take longer than our units
10	would. It was going to take longer to get him to the
11	hospital than our units would. I don't remember how
12	it was I don't know if it's because our units were
13	already there or if Grady was at a you know, a
14	standstill.
15	Q. Sure. And I understand that, sir. What I'm
16	asking you is whether or not you called an ambulance
17	to check on Mr. Griffin.
18	A. That, I can't recall. Wait. Hold on. You
19	said to transport or to check on?
20	Q. To check on Mr. Griffin.
21	A. You mean just to be clear, you're talking
22	about when Griffin's at the scene, have a Grady unit
23	come and check on him. Correct?
24	Q. Correct. At any time while

25

Okay.

So --

A.

1	Q on the scene, did you call an ambulance
2	to come check on Mr. Griffin?
3	A. Like I said, you know, no.
4	Q. Will you agree that it was obvious that
5	Mr. Griffin was in pain as he was walking around in
6	that backyard?
7	A. Once again, I don't remember seeing
8	Mr. Griffin walking.
9	Q. All right. I want to show you some video
10	clips.
11	Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2 on your
12	screen, sir?
13	A. I see a video. I don't see the 1.2 that
14	you're talking about.
15	Q. All right. Well, I'm going to
16	A. Okay. I see it.
17	Q. Okay. Great.
18	A. Okay.
19	Q. All right. Well, so the first video I'm
20	going to show you is marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2.
21	(Video plays.)
22	BY MR. KAHN:
23	Q. All right. Do you think that you did
24	anything wrong in Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2?
25	A. No, sir.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. Do you think the Atlanta Police Department
2	encourages police officers to act the way that you did
3	in Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2?
4	A. If the situation calls for it, yes.
5	Q. Do they teach that sort of thing at the
6	police academy?
7	MS. MILLER: Objection.
8	But you can answer if you know.
9	A. As far as when somebody's obstructing, to
10	take them down as quick as possible to alleviate the
11	threat, yes.
12	BY MR. KAHN:
13	Q. Did Abad do anything to stop you from
14	tackling Mr. Griffin?
15	A. No, sir.
16	Q. If Abad had waved his hand and told you to
17	stop, would you have still tackled Mr. Griffin?
18	MS. MILLER: Objection.
19	But you can answer.
20	MR. KAHN: What's the basis of that
21	objection? just so I can cure the question.
22	MS. MILLER: Are you asking a fact witness a
23	hypothetical?
24	MR. KAHN: What is the basis I asked you

Donald Vickers

1	MS. MILLER: Well, that is the basis of my
2	objection.
3	MR. KAHN: So it's an improper hypothetical?
4	That would be the answer to that would be your
5	objection?
6	MS. MILLER: Yes.
7	MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Noted.
8	BY MR. KAHN:
9	Q. So, sir, I'm going to ask you the question
10	again.
11	If Abad had waved his hand and told you to
12	stop, would you have still tackled Mr. Griffin?
13	MS. MILLER: Same objection.
14	But you can answer.
15	A. Probably not, being that it was probably not
16	a threat then. If I felt like Mr. Griffin was still a
17	threat, yes, I would have.
18	BY MR. KAHN:
19	Q. It would have been possible for Abad
20	A. It depends on if I felt like he was a threat
21	or not.
22	Q. Sure. It would have been possible for Abad
23	to wave his hand and tell you to stop. Right?
24	MS. MILLER: Objection.
25	You can answer.

```
1
               He'd have to be really fast about it.
         Α.
 2
    mean, by that -- I mean, at that point Mr. Griffin
 3
    swiped Abad's hand down towards his side. I
 4
    mean . . .
 5
    BY MR. KAHN:
 6
          Ο.
               If Abad had said --
 7
          Α.
               I don't know how --
 8
               Sorry. I didn't realize you weren't done.
          Q.
               If Abad had said, "Hey, Vickers, hold up,"
 9
10
    would you have still tackled Mr. Griffin?
11
               MS. MILLER:
                            Objection.
12
               But you can answer.
               Once again, if I felt like it was a threat,
13
         Α.
14
    yes, I would have.
15
    BY MR. KAHN:
               But if Abad had said, "Hey, Vickers, hold
16
17
    up, " would there -- would you -- what reason would you
    have to believe that there was a threat?
18
19
               MS. MILLER:
                            Same objection.
20
               But you can answer.
21
         Α.
               If Abad was able to say that,
22
    hypothetically, hypothetically it leads me to believe
23
    that there wouldn't be a threat, and I would see that
24
    there was no threat, and I probably would not tackle.
25
    Well, I wouldn't tackle if there wasn't any threat.
```

Donald Vickers

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1
    BY MR. KAHN:
 2
               Okay. And it would have been possible for
          Ο.
 3
    Abad to do that. Right?
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
 4
 5
               But you can answer.
 6
         Α.
               Not in that time span, no, sir. And there
 7
    was a threat.
 8
    BY MR. KAHN:
               When Mr. Griffin got out of the car, he put
 9
          Q.
10
    his weight on his left foot, didn't he?
11
         Α.
               That, I don't know. I'd have -- I don't
12
    know.
               Let's look at the video again. All right.
13
          Ο.
14
    I'm showing you Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2 again.
               (Video plays.)
15
16
    BY MR. KAHN:
17
               When Mr. Griffin got out of the car, he put
          Ο.
    his weight on his left foot, didn't he?
18
19
         Α.
               Okay. Yeah. He stood up, yes, sir.
20
               Did you hear Mr. Griffin cry out in pain as
21
    he got out of the car?
22
         Α.
               No, sir.
23
               Did you hear Mr. Griffin complain about his
          Q.
24
    ankle hurting as he got out of the car?
25
               No, sir.
         Α.
```

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta **Donald Vickers** 

10/21/2020 1 He didn't do any of that, did he? O. 2 No, sir. Α. 3 O. In fact, Mr. Griffin was standing up 4 straight, wasn't he? 5 He was standing up on both feet. Α. 6 Ο. He didn't have any trouble balancing before 7 you tackled him, did he? 8 Α. Not that I could see. Did you hear Mr. Griffin slurring his words 9 Ο. 10 at any time before you tackled him? 11 Α. No, sir. 12 And that's because he wasn't slurring his O. 13 words. Right? 14 Α. No, sir. I mean correct. 15 Did you hear Mr. Griffin scream out in pain Ο. 16 as you tackled him?

As we sit here today, do you think that you O. were completely justified in tackling Mr. Griffin?

On the video, sir.

- Α. Yes, sir.
- O. Do you think you should have done anything differently?
- 23 Α. No, sir.

Α.

24 Q. You claim you tackled Mr. Griffin because 25 you thought he was resisting. Right?

17

18

19

20

21

22

1	A. No. He was resisting, sir.
2	Q. And I believe the words that you used during
3	the OPS investigation were that you thought it was
4	going to be a fight on your hands. Is that is that
5	right?
6	A. There was a good chance, yes. That was
7	going through my mind, yes.
8	Q. All right. I'm going to show you another
9	video that's been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.3.
10	Can you can you see the screen, sir?
11	A. Yes, sir.
12	Q. And you're you have no problem hearing
13	any of the video footage, do you?
14	A. So far, no.
15	Q. Okay. Excellent.
16	(Video plays.)
17	BY MR. KAHN:
18	Q. Now, isn't it true that when you or isn't
19	it true that you didn't start charging at Mr. Griffin
20	until he had already brushed Abad's hand away and was
21	standing still?
22	A. I started charging once I seen that he
23	pushed Abad's hand away, and then I charged.
24	Q. Sure. But isn't it true that you didn't

25

start charging until after he had already brushed the

```
1
    hand away and at that point was standing still?
 2
               That's correct.
 3
         O.
              All right. I'm going to show you another
 4
    video. We're going to look at a clip that's been
 5
    premarked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.4.
6
               (Video plays.)
 7
    BY MR. KAHN:
8
               Did you hear Mr. Griffin say, "I can't move
         Q.
9
    my leq"?
10
               I heard him on the video talking to Abad,
         Α.
11
    yes, sir.
12
              But did you hear him say, "I can't move my
         Q.
13
    leq"?
14
              MS. MILLER: Objection. Just to clarify,
15
    are you talking about in the video or today -- I mean
16
    or at the date of the incident?
17
               MR. KAHN: I'm asking him questions about
18
    the video.
19
              MS. MILLER: Okay.
20
    BY MR. KAHN:
21
         Ο.
               So I'll ask -- I'll ask it again, sir. In
22
    Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.4 did you hear Mr. Griffin say,
23
    "I can't move my leq"?
24
               In the video, I hear that.
         Α.
25
              Did you hear Abad ask Mr. Griffin if his leg
         Q.
```

```
1
    was broken and Mr. Griffin responded, "I mean, you
 2
    guys hurt it"?
 3
               In the video, I hear that, yes, sir.
          Α.
 4
               Now, in the video did you hear Mr. Griffin
          O.
 5
    slur his words when he said, "I can't move my leq"?
 6
          Α.
               No, sir.
 7
          Q.
               And that's because he was not slurring.
 8
    Right?
 9
          Α.
               That's correct.
10
               And did you hear Mr. Griffin slur his words
          Q.
11
    when he said, "I mean, you guys hurt it"?
12
          Α.
               You asked if I heard him slurring then?
               Um-hum.
13
          Ο.
14
               No, sir, I did not hear him slur.
          Α.
15
               And that's because he was not slurring at
          Ο.
16
    that time either. Is that right?
17
          Α.
               That's correct.
               I'm going to show you a video that's been
18
          O.
    premarked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 4.1.
19
20
               (Video plays.)
21
               MR. KAHN: I think we lost Officer Vickers.
22
    Oh, there he is.
23
               Can you see me?
          Α.
24
    BY MR. KAHN:
25
          Q.
               Yes, I can see you now.
```

```
1
               Sir, in Plaintiff's Exhibit 4.1 Abad makes
 2
    Mr. Griffin stand up and walk. Right?
 3
         Α.
               I can't see anybody else.
 4
               So in --
         O.
 5
               THE WITNESS: Ms. Miller, I can't --
 6
               MR. KAHN: Oh.
 7
               THE WITNESS: -- see you.
8
               MS. MILLER: I'm still here.
    BY MR. KAHN:
9
               All right. So the question was, sir, in
10
         Ο.
    Plaintiff's Exhibit 4.1, the video we just looked at,
11
12
    Abad makes Mr. Griffin stand up and walk. Right?
13
               I see that -- maybe I saw it wrong, but -- I
14
    might have to see it again, but I did see that Abad
15
    did try to get Mr. Griffin to stand. It looked like
16
    Mr. Griffin was standing on his left foot. I thought
17
    his left foot was the one that was hurt. Or was it
18
    the right? Did I get that mixed up?
19
         Q.
               Sir, the question was --
20
               MR. KAHN: And I'm going to move to strike
21
    that as nonresponsive to the question.
22
    BY MR. KAHN:
23
               The question is is in Plaintiff's
         Ο.
24
    Exhibit 4.1 Abad makes Mr. Griffin stand up and walk.
25
    Correct?
```

1	A. He tried to get Abad to stand. I don't know
2	that he tried to get him to walk. I know he tried to
3	get him to stand.
4	Q. Let's look at the video again.
5	(Video plays.)
6	A. You lost me.
7	BY MR. KAHN:
8	Q. You can't see the video?
9	A. I can see it now. The computer cut out for
10	a second. But I see it. You can go ahead.
11	(Video plays.)
12	BY MR. KAHN:
13	Q. So, sir, the question was in Plaintiff's
14	Exhibit 4.1, the video that we just watched for a
15	second time, Abad makes Mr. Griffin stand up and walk.
16	Correct?
17	MS. MILLER: Objection. Asked and answered.
18	You can answer if you have something new to
19	add.
20	A. He made Mr. Griffin stand, and I don't know
21	if that was Mr. Griffin him trying to make
22	Mr. Griffin walk. I'm he made Mr. Griffin stand,
23	and I don't know if he was not sure about the broke or
24	not. So
25	

**Donald Vickers** 

1	BY MR. KAHN:
2	Q. Abad
3	A yes, he did stand. I don't know if he
4	was trying to make him walk on a on a injury.
5	Q. Sure. Well, I guess, let's break it down.
6	In that video that we just watched, Abad was standing
7	behind Mr. Griffin. Correct?
8	A. Beside him, but yes.
9	Q. And Officer Abad
10	A. Beside, behind.
11	Q. And Officer Abad was urging Mr. Griffin to
12	walk forward. Correct?
13	A. That's correct.
14	Q. Okay. Now, it looked like in that video
15	that Mr. Griffin was in pain, didn't it?
16	A. Yes, sir.
17	Q. Now, did you call an ambulance after it was
18	clear that Mr. Griffin couldn't walk?
19	A. No.
20	Q. Did any of the other
21	A. Like I said before, it was determined that
22	us getting him treatment was quicker.
23	Q. Did any of the other police officers call an
24	ambulance?
25	A. I don't know that a 4 was called. I know

1	I don't think they did, no, sir.
2	Q. Okay. Well, do you think Abad did anything
3	wrong in the video we just watched?
4	A. No, sir.
5	Q. So it was okay for Abad to make a seriously
6	injured citizen walk around on a broken ankle?
7	MS. MILLER: Objection.
8	But you can answer.
9	A. I don't know if Abad was trying to make him
10	walk cause further injury to Mr. Griffin. I don't
11	know what Abad was thinking.
12	It's about to tell me my computer's about to
13	cut off for some reason.
14	Seems like it's working now. This computer
15	may cut off. It if it does, I'll join right back as
16	soon as I figure out what's going on with it.
17	BY MR. KAHN:
18	Q. Okay. So I just I'm going to ask that
19	question one more time just to get a clear answer for
20	the record.
21	So, in your opinion, it was okay for Abad to
22	make a seriously injured citizen walk around on a
23	broken ankle.
24	MS. MILLER: Objection.
25	But you can answer.

Donald Vickers

```
1
               It would not be okay to make Mr. Griffin
 2
    walk on a hurt ankle.
 3
    BY MR. KAHN:
 4
               All right. I'm going to show you another
          0.
 5
             This one is going to be marked as Plaintiff's
 6
    Exhibit 2.2.
 7
               (Video plays.)
 8
    BY MR. KAHN:
 9
               Did you hear the other officer say, "He's
10
    got a lot of weight on it, " and then you responded,
11
     "Just a little bit," in the video we just watched?
12
               MR. KAHN: We lost him.
13
               (OFF THE RECORD 12:08-12:14 P.M.)
14
    BY MR. KAHN:
15
               And before we get back into the substantive
          Q.
16
    questions, I've just got to ask, Officer Vickers,
17
    during the brief time that we were off of the
18
    deposition, did you have any conversations with
19
    Mr. Miller, Ms. Parks, or Ms. Nair?
20
               I did just to let them know that the
21
    computer went down and that I'd be back up as soon as
22
    the computer comes up.
23
          Q.
               Okay. Excellent.
24
               What was the -- what was the last thing you
25
    heard me -- or did you see any of the video of
```

Donald Vickers

```
Plaintiff's Exhibit 2.2?
 1
 2
               I'll just start --
               I think I saw it. You might want to play it
 3
          Α.
 4
    again.
 5
          Ο.
               I'll start there. Okay.
 6
               All right. So I'm going to play Plaintiff's
 7
    Exhibit 2.2.
 8
               (Video plays.)
    BY MR. KAHN:
 9
10
               All right, sir. And so my question -- my
          Ο.
11
    first question is did you hear where the other officer
12
    said, "He's got a lot of weight on it," and you
13
    responded, "Just a little bit"?
14
          Α.
               I did.
15
               And you were joking about Mr. Griffin's
          Ο.
16
    weight.
              Correct?
17
               There's a bit about -- yes.
          Α.
18
          Ο.
               I'm sorry. What was your response?
19
               Yes.
          Α.
20
               Is it okay to make fun of a citizen's
          Ο.
21
    weight?
22
          Α.
               I wasn't making fun of his weight.
23
               Does APD tolerate that sort of behavior?
          Q.
24
               Like I said, I wasn't making fun of his
          Α.
25
    weight.
             He's a bigger guy. I mean, that's a fact.
                                                            Ι
```

1	wasn't making fun of his weight.
2	Q. Okay. Well, did you hear where you were
3	talking to the other officer in the video and said, "I
4	did, like, 50," and then said, "There's the skid
5	marks"?
6	A. I did hear that.
7	Q. Isn't it true that you were bragging to
8	another officer about tackling Mr. Griffin?
9	A. Just showing him what happened.
10	Q. So it's not true that you were
11	A. Showing the officer
12	Q bragging
13	A what happened.
14	Q. It's not true, sir, that you were bragging
15	to another officer?
16	A. Like I said, I was just advising the other
17	officer what happened.
18	Q. And you laughed after you advised the other
19	officer what happened, as you just put it, didn't you?
20	A. I did chuckle, yes.
21	Q. What's so funny about what happened?
22	A. Like I mentioned before, it's not funny.
23	Just, you know you just you don't touch a
24	officer. You don't you don't you don't resist.
25	O If it's not funny

Donald Vickers

1	A. We expect Mr. Griffin to follow the order.
2	Q. If it's not funny, then why did you laugh?
3	A. Also, like I said, I didn't expect him to
4	fall the way he did.
5	Q. Is it okay to laugh at a citizen who you've
6	seriously injured?
7	MS. MILLER: Objection.
8	But you can answer.
9	A. I don't think it's nice to poke fun or
10	bully, but to come to an understanding, I didn't see
11	anything wrong with it.
12	BY MR. KAHN:
13	Q. So there was nothing wrong with laughing at
14	Mr. Griffin as he lay on the ground in pain?
15	A. I wasn't laughing about Mr. Griffin being in
16	pain.
17	Q. What was it that you were laughing about?
18	A. Just the fact you have to listen to lawful
19	orders.
20	Q. And so that's funny to you?
21	A. If I'm you know
22	Q. So then you find that funny. Is that right?
23	A. The tackle?
24	Q. I don't you sir, you were the one who
25	was laughing, and my question was what was funny.

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 Only you know that. 2 Just laughing at the tackle and that he fell 3 the way he did. I was not laughing at his pain. 4 All right. I'm going to play -- we're going O. 5 to leave off right where I left on the video -- where we paused it -- on Plaintiff's Exhibit 2.2. 6 7 (Video plays.) 8 BY MR. KAHN: 9 Ο. Did you hear where you said, "We're laughing at you because you fell pretty hard after pushing an 10 11 officer, man. I find that funny, man"? 12 Α. I did hear that. As we sit here today, do you still find that 13 Ο. 14 funny? 15 It was just -- you telling it, no. Α. 16 I'm sorry. What was that? Ο. 17 You telling it; us talking about it, no. Α. 18 Q. That's not quite my question. As we sit here today, do you find the same 19 20 thing that you were laughing about in that video that 21 I just showed you -- do you still find that to be 22 funny? 23 Α. I understand why I was laughing then. 24 O. So do you still find it funny, as we sit 25 here today?

Donald Vickers

1	A. It's kind of old now. No.
2	Q. So it's not funny because it's old now?
3	A. Trying to make light of a situation then is
4	different than talking about it now.
5	Q. So it's not so funny anymore, is it?
6	A. Like I say, trying to make light of that
7	situation then; talking about it now, no.
8	Q. I'm going to show you another video. This
9	one is premarked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 4.2.
10	(Video plays.)
11	BY MR. KAHN:
12	Q. Did you hear when you told Mr. Griffin,
13	"You're such a little girl right now"?
14	A. I did.
15	Q. Is it okay for police officers to hurt a
16	citizen and then insult them?
17	A. Not particularly, no.
18	Q. But that's what you did, though, isn't it?
19	A. No, sir.
20	Q. You did not insult Mr. Griffin?
21	A. I was making awareness of letting no,
22	sir. I was not trying to insult Mr. Griffin.
23	Q. So then tell me what did you mean when you
24	said, "You're such a little girl right now"?
25	A. I mean, I've seen a lot of injuries, had a

Donald Vickers

OIIIIIII	vs. City of Atlanta Bonala vickers 10/21/20
1	lot of injuries, seen a lot of people with a a lot
2	weaker than Mr. Griffin have some serious injuries,
3	and I've never heard a grown man sound like that. And
4	I I think the alcohol and stuff played a role in
5	it.
6	Q. So, sir, isn't it true that you
7	A. And I was just trying to make him aware of
8	it.
9	Q. You were trying to make him aware that he
10	sounded like a little girl to you. Is that is that
11	what you're saying?
12	A. That's correct. Sometimes when people are
13	intoxicated, they don't they don't understand what
14	they're saying or doing.
15	Q. Sir, how can you explain to me how
16	calling someone a little girl, letting them know that
17	you think they're being a little girl is not an
18	insult?
19	A. I'm sorry. Can you say that again, please?
20	Q. How is calling another person or telling
21	another person that they're such a little girl not an
22	insult to that person?
23	A. It's more of just awareness. A you're
24	better you're better than this. You're stronger
25	than this. I mean

1	Q. So why didn't you use those inspirational
2	words
3	A. I was not trying to insult him.
4	Q. If you weren't trying to insult him, if you
5	were trying to tell him that "You're stronger than
6	this; you're better than this," then why didn't you
7	just tell him that?
8	A. Saying when somebody's intoxicated and
9	stuff, you can only reason with them so much. I
10	wasn't trying to have a big moment there. I was just
11	trying to, you know, let him know, "Hey, this is what
12	you're sounding out like right now."
13	Q. Did you hear you and the other police
14	officer laughing and joking about Mr. Griffin?
15	A. What part of Mr. Griffin were we laughing
16	and joking about?
17	Q. Sir, that is my question.
18	A. I don't understand the question.
19	Q. My question was is did you hear you and the
20	other officer laughing and joking about Mr. Griffin.
21	A. If you're referring to the video you just
22	showed me, if we were laughing and joking, we were not
23	trying to exclude Mr. Griffin from it. We weren't
24	trying to pick on him or anything like that. We were
25	just making him aware what he sounds like and dealing

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

with the situation at hand.

- So is this a group of three friends joking around to you? Is that what you're saying?
- No. We're not -- like the officer said, we Α. didn't know Mr. Griffin. We weren't judging him. Mr. Griffin made a mistake. That didn't mean he was a horrible person. It didn't mean that we didn't -still didn't have to take care of him.
  - Ο. Have you seen the movie "Major Payne"?
- Α. I have.
  - What was that reference to "Major Payne" Q. that you were talking about?
  - It's a point in the movie that -- a lot of Α. people find it funny when they talk about how you take one pain to get rid of another pain. Once again, trying to get light of the situation. I even asked him -- me saying, "Hey, you seen 'Major Payne'?" -that was me talking to Mr. Griffin. "Have you seen the movie?"
  - That was you talking to Mr. Griffin. Let's take another look at that video.
- 22 (Video plays.)
- 23 BY MR. KAHN:
- 24 So you just said, "You're such a little girl right now. What's wrong with you?" That was just a 25

1	little motivation for him to keep getting up to the
2	top of the driveway?
3	A. No. At that point we were still trying to
4	figure out what was wrong with Mr. Griffin. I
5	believed, due to his intoxication, him saying he had a
6	leg pain, but he kept putting his weight on the same
7	ankle that's hurt. A person that's not intoxicated
8	doesn't normally do that.
9	And so I was trying to it was a moment of
10	trying to figure out what's actually going on with
11	Mr. Griffin and dealing with his intoxication.
12	Q. Well, sir, are you are you a paramedic?
13	A. No. But I've had several broken ankle
14	bones in my ankle and including other bones.
15	Q. Do you have a medical degree?
16	A. I've also been tackled several times. I've
17	also been tackled several times. And, no, I don't
18	have a medical degree.
19	Q. So wouldn't it have been better to let the
20	doctors or the paramedics make that evaluation instead
21	of walking Mr. Griffin around on a broken ankle?
22	A. Us standing him up right there was trying to
23	get him to care. We didn't realize that he was
24	severely hurt. Once we did realize that, we left him
1	

25

there, and we backed the vehicle up to him.

And we

Gillilli	vs. City of Atlanta Donaid vickers
1	turned him around and got him into that vehicle as
2	best we could so we could transport him to Grady as
3	soon as possible.
4	Q. All right. So let's go back to the video.
5	(Video plays.)
6	BY MR. KAHN:
7	Q. So, sir, if I understand correctly, is it
8	your testimony today that we did not just look at a
9	video of you and another officer laughing and joking
10	about Mr. Griffin?
11	A. We were joking about a movie, and we were
12	trying to get well, I can't tell you what the other
13	officer's doing, but I can tell you that it was my
14	attempts to get Griffin to lighten up and to get his
15	mind off his current situation.
16	Q. Does the police academy teach recruits to
17	mock injured citizens?
18	A. No, sir.
19	Q. That's not okay, is it?
20	A. No, sir.
21	Q. Why did you make Mr. Griffin try to walk
22	after you saw how much pain he was in?
23	A. Once we saw how much pain he was in, then I
24	did not try to make him walk.
25	Q. Well, the video that we just looked at,

1	Plaintiff's 4.2, Exhibit 4.2 wasn't that after you
2	had already seen Officer Abad try to make him walk and
3	he fell down in pain?
4	A. Yes. And that's why me and the other
5	officer there were holding Mr. Griffin up, and he
6	was the attempts was to put his weight on his good
7	ankle, but he wanted to put his weight on his bad
8	ankle. We never wanted him to walk on his bad ankle.
9	Q. All right. I'm going to show you another
10	video clip. This is going to be Plaintiff's
11	Exhibit 3.3.
12	(Video plays.)
13	BY MR. KAHN:
14	Q. What's that vehicle that you're trying to
15	load Mr. Griffin into?
16	A. That is a our wagon. It's one of our
17	wagons that we use to transport.
18	Q. Did you see the other officer grab
19	Mr. Griffin by the ankle?
20	A. He grabbed him by the upper leg.
21	Q. Is there anything wrong with the way that
22	any of the officers in Plaintiff's Exhibit 3.3
23	behaved?
24	A. Them not knowing the current situation and
25	everything, no, I don't think so.

Donald Vickers

1	Q. Was there anything wrong with your body cam
2	on April 5th, 2019?
3	A. That, I don't know, sir.
4	Q. Well, didn't you tell the OPS investigator
5	that you had a problem with it?
6	A. If that was the date, then, yes, sir.
7	Q. Let's just pull up the exhibit.
8	Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 42 on your
9	screen?
10	A. I can.
11	Q. Do you see let me zoom in on this so we
12	can see it better.
13	Do you see where Plaintiff's Exhibit 42
14	summarizes what you told Investigator Nixon and it
15	says, "For whatever reason, it wasn't operating the
16	way it should have or should of or I don't know."
17	That's right there.
18	A. Yes, sir, I see it.
19	Q. And did I read that correctly?
20	A. Yes, sir.
21	Q. So then you told Investigator Nixon that
22	your body camera wasn't working. Right?
23	A. Yes, sir. I don't know if it was like I
24	said before, I don't know if it was a user error or if
25	it was a camera malfunction.

Donald Vickers

```
1
               Well, we know for a fact that it was not a
          Ο.
 2
    camera malfunction, don't we?
 3
               MS. MILLER:
                            Objection.
 4
               But you can answer if you know.
 5
         A.
               No, sir.
 6
    BY MR. KAHN:
 7
          Q.
               Excuse --
 8
               No, sir.
          Α.
               We do -- we do not know that?
 9
          Ο.
10
               I don't know that, sir. That was an old
          Α.
11
    camera -- to go further into it -- old camera.
12
    There's a switch at the top. There's been many
13
    complaints with the old camera that the switch was
14
    easy to turn off and on. I don't know if I kept
15
    hitting it. I don't know. Or I don't know if it was
    the camera itself that was messed up.
16
17
               All right. Can you see the screen -- my
          Ο.
18
    screen in Plaintiff's Exhibit 42, sir?
19
         Α.
               Yes, sir.
20
               Do you see where it says "A diagnostic
    evaluation of the BWC issued to SPO Vickers at the
21
22
    time of this incident does not indicate that the
23
    device suffered any type of malfunction -- or failure
24
    or malfunction attributed to anything other than the
25
    failure of the operator to properly activate the
```

```
1
              SPO Vickers did not report any issues about
 2
    his camera at the time or immediately after this
    incident occurred."
 3
 4
              Did I read that correctly, sir?
 5
         Α.
               Yes, sir.
 6
               So isn't it true, then, sir, that we know
         Ο.
 7
    for a fact that there was no malfunction with the
8
    camera, the body camera?
9
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
10
         Α.
               Once again --
11
               MS. MILLER: But you can answer if you know.
12
              No, sir. We don't know.
                                         I did make issues
         Α.
13
    about the camera not working. I can't tell you
14
    exactly when that was made. But also I can tell you,
15
    like I said, sometimes -- and I guess it's possible
16
    that my camera could have been one of them as well --
17
    the on-and-off button was easy to get hit and switched
18
    on and off. It could be done accidentally. I don't
19
    know, sir.
20
    BY MR. KAHN:
21
         Ο.
               Is it your testimony that you -- that you
22
    just don't remember the -- you don't remember at what
23
    point you realized that the camera was off and tried
24
    to turn it on?
25
               No, sir. I don't remember the exact point,
         Α.
```

**Donald Vickers** 

1	no, sir.
2	Q. Okay. Is it unusual for police officers to
3	turn off their body camera in the middle of an arrest?
4	MS. MILLER: Objection.
5	But you can I'm sorry. You can answer if
6	you know.
7	A. With current policy, no, sir. I mean, it
8	you're not supposed to.
9	BY MR. KAHN:
10	Q. So I know you're not supposed to. The
11	question is is it unusual for police officers to turn
12	off their body camera in the middle of an arrest.
13	MS. MILLER: Same objection.
14	But you can answer.
15	A. That there has to be some reason for it,
16	sir.
17	BY MR. KAHN:
18	Q. Well, is that something that happens
19	frequently in the Atlanta Police Department?
20	MS. MILLER: Objection.
21	A. Not that I know of.
22	BY MR. KAHN:
23	Q. Isn't the point of the body camera so it
24	captures the entire event?
25	A. For the most part, yes, sir.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. Now, have you ever heard of police officers
2	turning off their body camera after the use of force
3	to get their stories straight with each other?
4	A. You cut out a little bit.
5	Q. Sure.
6	A. Can you repeat that?
7	Q. I can. I can.
8	The question was have you ever heard of
9	police officers turning off their body cam after the
10	use of force in order to get their stories straight
11	with each other.
12	A. After the incident not to get their
13	stories straight, but just to collaborate everything
14	that took place and add everything together.
14 15	that took place and add everything together.  Q. So it is it is common, then, for police
15	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police
15 16	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about
15 16 17	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.
15 16 17 18	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.  MS. MILLER: Objection.
15 16 17 18 19	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.  MS. MILLER: Objection.  But you can answer if you know.
15 16 17 18 19 20	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.  MS. MILLER: Objection.  But you can answer if you know.  A. Only after the incident's over, sir.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.  MS. MILLER: Objection.  But you can answer if you know.  A. Only after the incident's over, sir.  BY MR. KAHN:
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Q. So it is it is common, then, for police officers to turn their body camera off and talk about the use of force at the scene of the arrest.  MS. MILLER: Objection.  But you can answer if you know.  A. Only after the incident's over, sir.  BY MR. KAHN:  Q. All right. I want to show you a few more

```
1
               (Video plays.)
 2
    BY MR. KAHN:
 3
          Ο.
               Did you hear yourself say, "Hey I'm going to
 4
    save my camera life, " just before the video ended?
 5
               That's correct.
          Α.
 6
          Ο.
               And I'm -- let me -- I didn't mean to get
 7
    rid of that screen. If you'll give me just a moment
 8
    here.
 9
               And if you look at the upper right-hand
    corner of Plaintiff's Exhibit 2.5, you can see that it
10
11
    says "T08:11:00." Correct?
12
               Yes, sir.
         Α.
               And that's a time stamp. Right?
13
          Ο.
               I believe so, yes, sir.
14
          Α.
15
               All right. I'm going to show you what's
          Q.
16
    been premarked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 5.2.
17
               I can't see anything, sir.
         Α.
18
               You didn't see the video I just showed?
          Ο.
19
                    I can -- I can hear something, but I
         Α.
               No.
20
    can't see anything.
21
               MS. MILLER: It wasn't displayed on the
22
    screen.
23
    BY MR. KAHN:
24
          Ο.
               I see. Let me -- let me try that again.
25
               Can you see it now?
```

**Donald Vickers** 

1	A. Yes, sir.
2	Q. Okay.
3	(Video plays.)
4	BY MR. KAHN:
5	Q. And you hear yourself say, "Hey, everyone
6	still on?"
7	A. The audio when you're talking is going in
8	and out. You're asking if I hear myself say, "Hey, is
9	everybody still on?" Is that correct?
10	Q. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.
11	A. Yes, sir, I hear that.
12	Q. And that was confirming whether or not all
13	the other officers in your general vicinity were on
14	their body cam footage. Correct?
15	A. That's correct. Because I was cutting mine
16	off. I wanted to make sure theirs get it.
17	Q. And if you look at the upper right-hand
18	corner, the end of that this video is T08:11:16.
19	Correct?
20	A. That's correct.
21	Q. All right. Now I'm going to show you can
22	you see my screen?
23	A. Yes, sir.
24	Q. I'm going to show you Plaintiff's Exhibit
25	MR. KAHN: It looks like who is Mr. Kane?

Donald Vickers

```
1
                            Okay. It looks like we had
               MS. MILLER:
 2
    Abad set to join at around 12:50 to start his
 3
    deposition at 1. And so he's going to go off.
 4
    we -- can -- I mean, do we have a time that we believe
 5
    this deposition will be over for him to start?
6
               MR. KAHN: I am not going to finish by 1.
                                                           I
 7
    can tell you that. Do you need to take a minute to
8
    speak with Officer Abad?
9
               MS. PARKS: Can we go off the record?
               MS. MILLER: Officer Abad -- yes. Can we go
10
11
    off the record, please?
12
               (OFF THE RECORD 12:45-12:48 P.M.)
13
    BY MR. KAHN:
14
         Ο.
               So I'm going to -- I'm going to share my
15
    screen with you again, sir, and show you a video
16
    that's been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 3.1.
17
               (Video plays.)
18
    BY MR. KAHN:
              Now, 3-point -- Plaintiff's Exhibit 3.1
19
         Q.
20
    shows you reactivating your body camera. Is that
21
    correct?
22
         Α.
               That's correct.
23
               And we see the time stamp here at the
          Q.
24
    beginning of Plaintiff's Exhibit 3.1 says "T08:12:42."
25
    Right?
```

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta **Donald Vickers** 1 That's correct. Α. And doesn't that mean that you turned your 2 Ο. 3 body cam off for just under two minutes? 4 Α. I believe so, yes. 5 Why did you do that? Ο. 6 The only thing I can say is from the initial cutoff, it was to conserve battery life. Why I had to 7 8 cut it back on, I don't know. I'm assuming because 9 I'm probably going to have to deal with Mr. Griffin 10 again. 11 Who did you speak to during --Ο. 12 And if I'm going to deal with Mr. Griffin, I Α. 13 want it on. 14 Q. During the -- during the Sure. 15 approximately two minutes that your camera was off, 16 who did you speak to? 17 That, I don't know. I can't make out that Α. 18 officer, and I don't know if I was speaking to that 19

- officer.
- Did you -- did you talk to anybody in the approximately two minutes that your camera was off?
- Α. I'm assuming I did being that I was right there with those officers. I'm sure we spoke on something. I don't know what.
  - Do you have any recollection about what you Q.

20

21

22

23

24

25

1	spoke or about what you spoke and to whom you spoke
2	it?
3	A. You broke up. I'm sorry.
4	Q. Do you have any recollection of who you
5	spoke with?
6	A. No, sir, I don't.
7	Q. During that almost two-minute period that
8	you turned your body cam off, did you get with the
9	other police officers to make sure that your stories
10	lined up?
11	A. I don't think so, sir. They didn't have
12	anything to do with the case. Unless it's just Abad.
13	Those other officers really weren't there.
14	Q. I think we can see that let me share
15	let me share the other exhibit with you. Plaintiff's
16	Exhibit 3.1 it was.
17	That's the wrong exhibit. Excuse me.
18	I think we can see from Plaintiff's
19	Exhibit 5.2 that it was Abad sitting in the driver's
20	seat of a police vehicle. Do you see that?
21	A. Yes, sir, I do. I see the side of his face,
22	yes, sir.
23	Q. Okay. Excellent. So then I'll ask the
24	question just once more now that we've established
25	that fact.

1	During the almost two-minute period that you
2	turned your body cam off while you were standing
3	directly next to Mr or Officer Abad, did you get
4	with Officer Abad to compare stories and line make
5	sure they line up?
6	A. Being that that was Abad, we probably did
7	talk. What we talked about, I can't recall.
8	Q. Do you think that you compared stories to
9	make sure they lined up?
10	A. We probably talked about the incident. I
11	don't I don't know what we talked about, sir.
12	Q. So for all for all we know, you could
13	have talked with Officer Abad, compared stories, and
14	made sure that y'all were on the same page. Is that
15	right?
16	A. Possibly. Yeah. I don't I don't
17	that's possible.
18	Q. Is there anything wrong with what you did in
19	those videos we just looked at?
20	A. I believe Abad's camera was on. Knowing
21	policy, I probably shouldn't have cut my camera off.
22	Q. So is there anything wrong with what you
23	did?
24	A. Like I said, I probably shouldn't have cut
25	my camera off. Did it did it change the outcome or

1	anything? Was there any foul play? No, sir.
2	MR. KAHN: Move to strike that as
3	nonresponsive.
4	BY MR. KAHN:
5	Q. Are cops allowed to just turn off their body
6	cameras whenever they want?
7	A. Not during a case, sir. Not during an
8	incident where I'm dealing with the suspect or
9	well, suspect. There'd have to be something pretty
10	major to cut it off like that when I'm dealing
11	face-to-face with a suspect.
12	Q. There are rules against doing that, in fact,
13	aren't there? There are rules against cutting off
14	your body camera whenever you want.
15	A. We have a policy, yes, sir.
16	Q. Don't you think that the jury in this case
17	deserves to hear what you said during those
18	approximately two minutes that your camera's off while
19	you were standing next to Officer Abad?
20	MS. MILLER: Objection.
21	But you can answer.
22	A. What I said wasn't to Mr. Griffin.
23	Mr. Griffin was not there. So I don't think it would
24	have made or break anything. Like I said, there was
25	no foul play. So I don't think so.

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23

1 BY MR. KAHN:

- Q. After the incident on April 5th, did you speak with Officer Abad about what happened at any -- at any time?
  - A. Yes, sir, I'm sure we did.
- Q. On how many occasions did you speak with Officer Abad about this case?
- A. I couldn't even give you a ballpark. I don't know. We spoke several times.
- Q. Several times. Did either of you speculate that -- oh, I didn't mean -- I didn't realize you weren't -- you weren't through. You can -- you can finish.
- A. Oh, I was just going to say we really didn't speak on it until -- we probably spoke on it maybe, you know, just with people around, "Hey, this is what we did last night," or whatever. But that was pretty much dropped. And then probably, you know, a few months later, when we found out there was a complaint, we -- it probably brought things back up again, but that's it.
- Q. Did either of you speculate that Mr. Griffin might make a complaint?
- MS. MILLER: Objection.
- But you can answer if you know.

1	A. We didn't know. We didn't know. We
2	didn't
3	BY MR. KAHN:
4	Q. Did either of you have or I'll ask just
5	for you.
6	Did you speculate that Mr. Griffin might
7	make a complaint?
8	A. I can't can't really recall. I don't
9	I don't think it's speculating. Maybe a thought will
10	go through your head. That happens on a lot of cases.
11	Q. Sure.
12	A. So, I mean, the better answer I just I
13	can't recall.
14	Q. That's fair.
15	Were you surprised to learn that Mr. Griffin
16	had, in fact, filed a complaint?
17	A. I think when we found out, yeah, we were.
18	Q. Did you ever send text messages to Abad
19	about what happened with Mr. Griffin?
20	A. Not that I know of.
21	Q. Do you do you and Abad ever communicate
22	through text message socially?
23	A. Me and him? Very rarely. I think we
24	usually just call one another.
25	Q. So there are no text messages out there in

which the two of you are discussing this case?

- A. Not that I know of.
- Q. Did you meet with Abad at any time before the OPS interviews to talk about what happened on April 5th?
- A. I think we bumped each other in headquarters -- excuse me -- a few weeks ago. But we were just passing each other in the hall, whatever, saying "hey" to each other. We didn't really -- we've never planned to say, "Hey, let's meet and let's talk about this or discuss this." No.
- Q. And so just to clarify, I'm talking about the OPS interviews, so the internal affairs investigation about Tyler's complaint. Before you were interviewed by Investigator Nixon, did -- sorry. Let me just strike that. That was a terrible question.

So my question is is specifically, before your OPS interviews with Investigator Nixon, did either you -- did either of you get together -- you being Abad -- get together to talk about this case before the interview?

A. Okay. So when it was going through internal affairs, OPS, we were still working side by side with each other. So I'm sure we talked about it a little

1 bit. 2 At any point did you -- did you talk to each Ο. other about what you would say to Investigator Nixon? 3 4 Α. I mean, I can't recall everything that was 5 I mean, I think it would be natural for us to kind of give a little, you know, speculation of what 6 7 questions they might would ask us or whatever, but I 8 don't think -- I mean, I can't -- I can't really 9 recall. 10 Did you and Abad practice how you would Ο. 11 answer certain questions that you talked about? 12 No, sir. We never practiced, rehearsed, or Α. 13 anything like that. Not that -- not that I can 14 recall. 15 At any time did you ask Abad to testify a 0. 16 certain way? 17 No, sir. Α. At any time did Abad ask you to testify a 18 O. 19 certain way? 20 Α. No, sir. 21 O. I want to ask you a few questions about the 22 police report in this case. 23 Sir, can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 48 on 24 your screen? 25

Α.

I can.

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Donald Vickers

- All right. I'm going to flip down here to Ο. the narrative. Do you see where the police report says Mr. Griffin, quote, was having difficulty maintaining balance on his own as he was leaning onto Abad's arm that was holding his shirt to assist him in balancing? Α. Yes, sir, I see it. And we watched -- we watched a video of that Ο. occurrence today, didn't we? Α. Yes, sir. And you testified that Mr. Griffin had no Q. trouble maintaining his balance, didn't you?
  - A. No. I didn't say he had trouble maintaining his balance. I said he was standing -- he did have his arm up on the door. It doesn't take much leverage to hold yourself up to keep yourself from falling if you're holding onto a car or door. Mr. Griffin was doing it with me and the other officer when we had him standing.
  - Q. I didn't see Mr. Griffin holding Abad's arm for balance. Did you?
  - A. I don't recall him holding Abad's arm -- Abad's arm for balance.
- Q. And so that part of the police report is false, isn't it?

Donald Vickers

```
1
                            Objection.
               MS. MILLER:
               But you can answer if you know.
 2
               I'm not Abad. I didn't write the report.
 3
         Α.
 4
    Mr. Griffin was holding himself up. Abad didn't go
 5
    back and look at the video after the arrest. So he
 6
    was going off his own memory and his own -- you know,
 7
    what he recalled.
 8
    BY MR. KAHN:
 9
               Sir, so that part of the police report is
10
    not true. Right?
11
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
12
               But you can answer if you know.
               It's not true as far as from what I could
13
         Α.
14
    tell. He wasn't leaning to Abad's arm, but he was
15
    using the door on the car for balance.
16
    BY MR. KAHN:
17
               Let's look at the video again. Let me show
          Ο.
18
    you Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.3.
               (Video plays.)
19
20
    BY MR. KAHN:
21
          O.
               Where in Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.3 did you see
22
    Mr. Griffin hold Abad for balance?
23
         Α.
               Like I said, I did -- I didn't recall seeing
24
    Mr. Griffin holding Abad's arm for balance.
25
               He didn't do that.
          Q.
```

**Donald Vickers** 

1	So my question to you, then, is how can we
2	trust anything that Abad says if he's willing to lie
3	in a police report?
4	MS. MILLER: Objection. Yeah. I'm going to
5	instruct you not to answer that.
6	MR. KAHN: On what basis are you going to
7	instruct him not to answer that? Is this
8	attorney-client privileged information? Because
9	that's the only legitimate basis for you to do so.
10	MS. MILLER: The question was whether Abad
11	was lying in the police report and why could we trust
12	that. Is that the question?
13	MR. KAHN: Well, the question was how can we
14	trust Abad anything Abad says if he's willing to
15	lie in the police report.
16	MS. MILLER: Okay. I'll take that objection
17	back. I'll withdraw that objection.
18	Go ahead. You can answer if you know,
19	Officer Vickers SPO Vickers.
20	BY MR. KAHN:
21	Q. Just so we have
22	A. Like I said
23	Q. So we have a clean record, I'm going to ask
24	that question one more time.
25	And the question is how can we trust

1	anything Abad says if he's willing to lie in a police
2	report?
3	A. There's a big difference between lying and
4	going off what you recall. Like I said, I could see
5	Mr. Griffin using the car to hold himself up his
6	balance. Abad probably remembers it a little
7	differently.
8	I don't see how you can just I mean, I
9	think you can tell the difference between a blatant
10	lie and, you know, going off memory or what Abad
11	recalled.
12	Q. All right. Were you investigated by the
13	Office of Professional Standards for the way that you
14	treated Mr. Griffin?
15	A. Yes, sir, I was.
16	Q. Were you investigated for the use of
17	excessive force?
18	A. Yes, sir.
19	Q. What was the finding of that investigation?
20	A. There the case is still open as far as I
21	know.
22	Q. The OPS investigation is open as far as you
23	know?
24	A. Yeah. They haven't got back to me on the
25	whole the whole findings and of the use of force.

1	Q. So no one has no one has spoken to you
2	about the investigative findings of the use of force
3	and the other allegations concerning Mr. Griffin?
4	A. Yes, sir. I haven't I haven't signed
5	anything on use of force or other allegations as far
6	as that. The only thing I've received was body-worn
7	camera. That's the only thing I've been informed
8	
	about.
9	Q. Well, I guess, then, let me ask you this:
10	Do you think that you should be sustained on your
11	allegation of excessive force?
12	A. Absolutely.
13	Q. You absolutely think it should be sustained?
14	A. Yes, sir.
15	Q. All right. Let's go through some of your
16	some of the
17	A. It should
18	Q investigative
19	A be
20	Q papers. All right. I'm going to show
21	you Plaintiff's Exhibit 42 if I can find it. All
22	right.
23	So we're going to go to the first page of
24	Plaintiff's Exhibit 42. So the first page of this
25	exhibit shows the investigation disposition for each

1	of the claims that were brought against you. Correct?
2	A. That's correct.
3	Q. Do you see first it says that you were
4	exonerated for maltreatment or unnecessary force?
5	A. I think this is the first time I've seen
6	this. If you don't mind, just give me a sec.
7	Q. Yeah. Of course. Of course.
8	A. Okay. I'm sorry. I at first when I was
9	reading it, it looked like something different. Go
10	ahead, sir.
11	
	Q. Do you agree with that finding?
12	A. With not sustained?
13	Q. With exonerated.
14	A. Yes, sir.
15	Q. Now, have you heard the testimony of any of
16	the other police officers in this case?
17	A. No, sir.
18	Q. So you haven't heard Investigator Nixon's
19	testimony on behalf of the City of Atlanta that the
20	force that you used was excessive?
21	A. No, sir. I haven't I haven't heard that.
22	Q. All right. I'm going to pull up a little
23	exhibit here.
24	Can you see the can you see what appears
25	to be the cover page of a 30(b)(6) deposition of

```
1
    Arthur Nixon?
 2
          Α.
               Yes, sir.
 3
          O.
               All right. I'm going to scroll down here.
 4
    And do you see the highlighted text where it says "Do
 5
    you think there's anything wrong with the way that
    Defendant Vickers acted in Plaintiff's Exhibit 1.2?"
 6
 7
               And then Investigator Nixon responds, "Yes."
 8
               Do you see that?
 9
          Α.
               Yes, sir.
10
               And then the next question -- Ms. Nair
          Q.
11
    raised an objection; so I'm going to omit that from
12
    what I read to you, but let the record show that it is
13
    there.
14
               And then I asked Investigator Nixon, "Do you
15
    think that Defendant Vickers was justified in his use
    of force?"
16
17
               To which he responds, "Again, I would have
    handled it differently. I wouldn't have tackled
18
    someone like that for a swiping of the hand.
19
20
    would have handled -- I would not have tackled."
21
               Do you see that?
22
         Α.
               I do.
23
               What do you think about that?
          Q.
24
          Α.
               I don't know what he's experienced or
25
    anything like that. That's -- I mean, he wasn't
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# there. I was. I saw a threat, and I handled it.

Q. Now, have you heard SPO Fite's testimony, your own use-of-force instructor, that was on behalf of the City of Atlanta, that the force that you used against Mr. Griffin was excessive?

### A. No, sir.

Q. Can you -- can you now see what appears to be the cover page of a 30(b)(6) deposition of Patrick Fite?

### A. Yes, sir, I can see that.

Q. Do you see where it says -- and it's on two pages; so I'm -- so I'll have to scroll. But do you see where it says "So I'm going to ask the question again. That was an answer, but it -- I don't think it answered my question. And that's, based on what you saw, Mr. Fite, was the use of force justified in the video"?

And then Mr. Fite responds -- SPO Fite responds, "From what I saw, I wouldn't think so."

Do you see that?

## A. Okay.

Q. And you see that the --

### A. I see it.

Q. You see that there was no objection by the City of Atlanta for this bit of testimony. Correct?

Donald Vickers

```
1
               I see that.
          Α.
               So it's on behalf of the City of Atlanta in
 2
          Ο.
 3
    this case. Right?
 4
               MS. MILLER: Objection.
 5
               But you can answer if --
 6
         A.
               I'm sorry.
 7
               MS. MILLER: -- you know.
 8
               I didn't hear your question.
         Α.
    BY MR. KAHN:
 9
10
          Ο.
               I'll withdraw that.
11
               I didn't hear the question. All I heard
          Α.
12
    was --
               It's fine. I'll withdraw it.
13
          Ο.
14
    binding; so it doesn't matter.
15
               Well, let me just ask you, Officer Vickers,
16
    what do you think about that testimony?
17
               Once again, that's how he would have handled
          That's what he saw. I was there. I saw and felt
18
    it.
19
    a threat, and I handled it.
20
               So you did testify that SPO Fite was your
21
    instructor for use of force, didn't you?
22
         Α.
               That's correct.
23
               So do you think the jury should listen to
24
    what SPO Fite has to say about the way that you acted?
25
               That's up to the jury.
         Α.
```

Donald Vickers

1	Q. Do you have any idea why you were exonerated
2	on the use of excessive force if two senior-ranking
3	officials, including the person who investigated you,
4	thought the force that you used was excessive?
5	MS. MILLER: Objection.
6	But you can answer that question.
7	A. Once again, I don't know what they were
8	feeling, what they were thinking. But as far as
9	exonerated, there was a threat. I felt the threat.
10	There was a danger. I took care of it.
11	BY MR. KAHN:
12	Q. Isn't it isn't it because the use of
13	excessive force is tolerated by the City of Atlanta
14	Police Department?
15	MS. MILLER: Objection.
16	But you can answer if you know.
17	A. I think the City of Atlanta does a good job
18	on treating everybody fairly.
19	BY MR. KAHN:
20	Q. All right. Let's go back to Plaintiff's
21	Exhibit 42. Do you see next where it says that you
22	were sustained for violating the rule on reporting
23	when force was used?
24	A. Yes, sir, I see that.
25	Q. Do you agree with that finding?

1	A. That's their policy. This is the first time
2	I've seen of it. I'm not running a judgment on it. I
3	can say that a report definitely wouldn't have hurt.
4	Q. So then what we're looking at here, this
5	sustained finding that means that you failed to
6	report the use of force against Mr. Griffin, doesn't
7	it?
8	A. No. I don't think it says I failed to
9	report the use of force. We notified a supervisor of
10	the incident.
11	Q. Well, then why were you sustained for
12	failing to report force when it's required?
13	A. Because I didn't do a written report.
14	Q. Next, it says that you were sustained for an
15	unsatisfactory performance.
16	Do you see that?
17	A. I do see that, sir.
18	Q. What do you agree with that finding that
19	you performed unsatisfactorily?
20	A. Like I said, this is the first time I've
21	seen all this. I'd like to see what parts but I
22	can't give you a definite answer on that right now.
23	Q. Well, do you agree that your performance in
24	the videos that we've watched was not satisfactory?
25	A. I can't answer that right now.

1	Q. Why not?
2	A. I haven't evaluated it. I don't when
3	they say "unsatisfactory," I don't know which parts
4	they're talking about.
5	Q. All right. That's fair. We'll get into
6	that.
7	Next, it says that you were there was a
8	sustained finding for failing to conform to
9	directives the conformance to directives work rule.
10	Do you see that?
11	A. I do see that one.
12	Q. And that was that violation was about
13	your conduct regarding the body cam and Tyler Griffin.
14	Is that right?
15	A. That's correct, sir.
16	Q. Do you agree with that finding, that
17	sustained finding?
18	A. I do, sir.
19	Q. And then, finally, it says you were you
20	were sustained for violating the rule about
21	appropriate action that is required.
22	Do you see that one?
23	A. I do see that one.
24	Q. And does that relate to your failure to call
25	for medical attention for Mr. Griffin?

1	A. It could. I don't like I said, I can't
2	agree to it, because I don't know which part they're
3	talking about.
4	Q. Okay. So based on what we're looking at
5	here, you were found to have violated all of the rules
6	that you were accused of violating except for the use
7	of force. Correct?
8	A. That's correct.
9	Q. Do you understand that to mean that the City
10	of Atlanta supports and condones the force that you
11	did use against Mr. Griffin?
12	MS. MILLER: Objection.
13	But you can answer.
14	A. I do. I believe they looked into it. They
15	obviously did an investigation. They they're
16	accusing me of all this other stuff. I think after
17	doing an investigation, they can see that once
18	Mr. Griffin was no longer a danger or a threat, his
19	well-being was a concern of mine.
20	BY MR. KAHN:
21	Q. All right. We're going to flip over to
22	page 3. All right. Do you see the highlighted text
23	that says "SPO Vickers did not relay pertinent
24	information to his supervisor (nor in writing)
25	concerning the tackling of and injury sustained by

1 Mr. Griffin"? 2 I do see that. 3 O. Why didn't you tell your supervisor about 4 the force that you used on Mr. Griffin? 5 That was mentioned. I think -- I think Α. 6 because it was done over air, over radio. At that time, when I was dealing with that, the supervisors 7 8 and the zone was going through a lot. I may have not 9 made myself clear. 10 So is it your testimony that you think Ο. 11 Plaintiff's Exhibit 42, which is an OPS document, is 12 incorrect? Do I think it's -- if no supervisor was 13 14 aware of it, I guess I didn't make myself clear. 15 That's all I can say. 16 Did you know that you were supposed to tell 17 your supervisor when you used force in the field? 18 Α. Yes, sir. 19 So is it fair to say, then, that you chose 20 not to tell your supervisor? 21 Α. No, sir, that's not fair. 22 Let's flip to page 4. Do you see the Q. 23 highlighted text? And I'm going to -- I'm going to --24 for the record, I'm going to omit the parenthetical. 25 Do you see the highlighted text that says

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers

1	"SPO Vickers' multiple failures during this incident
2	as indicated place him in clear violation of
3	ADP.SOP.2010 Work Rules 4.2.37"?
4	A. Yes, sir.
5	Q. Did you know at the time that you were
6	supposed to call an ambulance for Mr. Griffin?
7	A. Yes, sir. At that time, it was my goal to
8	get Mr. Griffin to the hospital as soon as possible
9	and get him the care he needed, and I knew that we
10	could get him there quicker than the Grady EMS units
11	could arrive. And, you know, it was raining and
12	stuff.
13	I guess, you know, I should have took the
14	extra time and had Mr. Griffin sit out there and wait,
15	if that's what they're saying.
16	Q. Do you see the highlighted text that says
17	"SPO Vickers' body-worn camera was not activated at
18	the onset of this call for service and did not start
19	recording until he had already made the tackle of
20	Griffin and was on the ground with him"?
21	A. Yes, sir, I see that.
22	Q. And you told Investigator Nixon that there
23	was a problem with your camera.
24	A. Yes, sir.

404-856-0966

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Q.

I guess we already looked at this, but I'm

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1 going to go through it again.

- A. I told him that I had problems with my camera. I don't know --
  - Q. Sorry. What?
- A. I told him I was having problems with the camera. Now, as far as that incident, like I said -- you asked me about -- I don't know if that was a malfunction or if that was a user error.
- Q. Don't -- do you -- do you understand what -- this text to mean in this OPS document that it was not a malfunction; that it was, in fact, a user error?

  You being the user.
- A. Okay. Once again, that just shows that the camera's been switched on and off. That doesn't mean that the button's loose, and it doesn't mean that it didn't accidentally get switched off.

And I don't work for that unit. I don't know the diagnostics that they do on the camera. I mean, I see what you -- when you do an audit, I can see that. But other than just using the camera and able to see the audit -- what it tells you to do, I don't know what-all it can pick up and what it can't pick up as far as errors.

- O. Well, did you --
- A. I mean, I had -- the camera before that had

Case 1:20-cv-02514-VMC

1	a screw that came out of it.
2	Q. Did you appeal this finding
3	A. Are you going to let me finish?
4	Q made by OPS?
5	You're still speaking?
6	A. Actually, that just came down to me no.
7	It came down. I signed it. We have a new camera now.
8	And to be honest, I'm over it. But I signed it.
9	There's because there's no way for me to
10	prove what happened that day. So I gave them my
11	story, and they stuck to their guns. And that's all
12	that can be done.
13	But, like I mentioned before, one of the
14	cameras I turned in had a screw that was coming out of
15	it. The audit doesn't pull that up. The audit
16	doesn't show, hey, camera's missing a screw.
17	Q. Well, how do you know that?
18	A. They showed me the audits. It just shows
19	you when the camera was activated, when it was
20	recording, what it recorded, and when it was turned
21	off and on.
22	Q. Well, what was your punishment for
23	everything that you did to Mr. Griffin?
24	A. Like I said, I haven't signed anything yet;
25	so I don't know.

Case 1:20-cv-02514-VMC

1	Q. You haven't been you haven't been
2	suspended for this?
3	A. The camera I just got that. I will be
4	suspended for that.
5	Q. So when I say when I say what is your
6	punishment for everything that you did for to
7	Mr. Griffin, I mean everything we just went through in
8	Plaintiff's Exhibit 42 and not necessarily the
9	excessive force. So have you been informed of what
10	your punishment will be for all of the rule violations
11	that we just
12	A. Not at this time, I have not. At this time
13	I have not.
14	Q. But, then, how are you aware that you will
15	be suspended?
16	A. Only for the body camera. Only for the body
17	camera. I that's a separate unit that handle
18	the body camera unit from what I'm told, they deal
19	with just the body camera issues and policy.
20	So they just finished their findings, and I
21	met with them last week. I believe it was last week.
22	Whatever the 15th was. Yeah, it was last week.
23	Q. All right. Have you seen Plaintiff's
24	Exhibit 45 before?
25	A. No, I don't think I've seen this.

1	Q. I want to go through a few a few of these
2	things anyway.
3	So do you see where it says there's a
4	category that says "Rule." Do you see where it says
5	Rule 4.2.51?
6	A. I do.
7	Q. And as we know, that was for failing to
8	report the use of force. Correct?
9	A. Yeah. I'd have to look back to make sure it
10	matched the I assume so.
11	Q. And then we have the "Recommended Action,"
12	and it says "OA." Oral admonishment?
13	A. Okay.
14	Q. I am asking you. Is that is that what
15	you understand that to mean?
16	A. I believe so. Forgive me. This is my first
17	time seeing this. I don't think I've ever seen a form
18	before. So this is my first time looking at it. But
19	that yeah. I'm pretty sure that's what that means.
20	Q. Well, what happens typically during an oral
21	admonishment?
22	A. This is just my understanding: That an oral
23	would be given oral reprimand within a reckoning
24	period. If it happens again, it goes up to a category
25	higher, and

Donald Vickers

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1 Did --Ο. 2 Α. -- so on. 3 Q. Sorry. 4 Is an oral admonishment really that big of a 5 deal? 6 Α. It can be, yes, sir. 7 Q. Well, how many -- how many times have you 8 received an oral admonishment in your career as an Atlanta police officer? 9 10 Α. That, I don't know. But I can guarantee you 11 it's not for the same thing. 12 Sure. I'm just asking generally. Ο. That, I don't know, sir. I couldn't even 13 Α. 14 give you a ballpark. I apologize. 15 Ο. Would it be -- is that because there are too 16 many oral admonishments to remember? 17 It's probably only a couple. I just --Α. 18 I just couldn't give you a -- an accurate number. 19 Q. Okay. Do you see where underneath that rule 20 it says Rule 4.2.37? 21 Α. I do. 22 And that's the rule for failing to transport Q. 23 someone to the hospital by ambulance. And for that, 24 it looks like you got a "WR." 25 Do you see that?

Donald Vickers

1	A. Yeah, I see that.
2	Q. And "WR," my understanding, is a is a
3	written reprimand. Is that your understanding?
4	A. Yes, sir.
5	Q. And is a written reprimand sort of on the
6	on the scale of police punishment, is that just sort
7	of like a little more serious than an oral
8	admonishment?
9	A. It's more serious, yes, sir.
10	Q. For a written reprimand, do they essentially
11	just give you a letter that says, you know, "Don't do
12	that again"?
13	A. No, sir. It sits in a it sits in your
14	file, and you have a reckoning period or probation
15	period that, with a same violation in that category
16	or category of violation in that SOP, your
17	punishment is a lot harsher.
18	Q. Do you are you given
19	A. It's not like you're just going to be
20	written up again.
21	Q. So are you given when you receive a
22	written reprimand, do you receive a personally
23	receive a copy of it?
24	A. Yes, sir.
25	O Are you a are you writing something right

Donald Vickers

1	now, sir?
2	A. I'm just writing the rules in the like I
3	said, this is new to me. So I'm just writing that.
4	Q. I see. I see.
5	A. Would you like to see it? It's
6	scribble-scrabble.
7	Q. Not at this time. Thank you.
8	So I guess for the time that
9	A. I tell you what
10	Q. Yes. Do you need to take a break?
11	A. No. No, I don't need to take a break. I
12	was done. I was just writing the one, two, three,
13	four categories there.
14	Q. I see.
15	A. Five.
16	Q. So my question the rule that we just
17	looked at for the failing for the failing to
18	transport Mr. Griffin by ambulance that was the
19	second one, and you are given a written reprimand for
20	it. So my question is so APD shoves a man with a
21	broken ankle into the back of a wagon, and all they do
22	is write you a letter?
23	MS. MILLER: Objection.
24	BY MR. KAHN:
25	Q. Is that is that right?

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1 MS. MILLER: You can --2 Sorry. Α. 3 MS. MILLER: You can answer if you know. 4 All I heard was a little bit of static and Α. 5 then "Objection." The connection was lost. BY MR. KAHN: 6 7 Q. Sure. I'll repeat it. 8 So APD shoves a man with a broken ankle into the back of a wagon, and all they do is write you a 9 10 letter. Is that right? 11 MS. MILLER: Objection. 12 That's not right. Α. 13 BY MR. KAHN: 14 Q. That's not right? Well, what does this 15 mean, then? 16 Α. Nobody was shoved. 17 And then so here we have -- we have 0. 18 Rule 4.2.33, and that was for failing to activate the 19 body camera. Right? 20 Α. That's correct. And for that, it looks like there was a 21 Ο. 22 recommended suspension of three days. 23 Do you see that? 24 Α. That's correct. I do see that. 25 How many -- how many days were you actually Q.

Donald Vickers

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1 given for that suspension? 2 Α. Three days. They didn't reduce it down to two days? 3 O. 4 No, sir. Α. 5 Would you say that of the -- of the things Ο. 6 that you were found -- of the sustained findings, that 7 the failure to activate the body camera is the most 8 serious offense? 9 Out of all these -- I'm sorry. Just to be 10 clear, can you repeat that? 11 Yeah. So of the -- of the rule Q. Yeah. 12 violations for which you were sustained, would it be 13 fair to say that the failure to activate the body 14 camera is the most serious? 15 Α. It's the most severe punishment. 16 And would you agree that the reason that 17 that punishment is the most severe is because body 18 camera is really important to a case like this? 19 Α. Yes, sir. I think that's fair to agree to. 20 Ο. And body camera footage is generally more 21 reliable than a police officer's testimony, isn't it? 22 A. No, sir. 23 You don't think that body camera that's Ο.

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than someone's verbal testimony?

video footage showing an actual event is more reliable

**Donald Vickers** 

1	A. I think they both have their pros and cons.
2	Q. And do you see where it says Rule 4.1.1?
3	A. I do, sir.
4	Q. And that that was for your verbal abuse
5	of Mr. Griffin, wasn't it?
6	A. I'm assuming so. I like I said, I don't
7	know.
8	Q. And for your verbal abuse of Mr. Griffin,
9	you were given an oral admonishment. Right?
10	A. It appears that.
11	Q. And then in this in this worksheet
12	there's no punishment for the force that you used on
13	Mr. Griffin. Right?
14	A. That's correct.
15	Q. So would you agree, then, that what that
16	means is that an Atlanta police officer can do what
17	you did to Mr. Griffin and get away with it so long as
18	they activate their body camera, they tell their
19	supervisor, and call an ambulance?
20	A. As long as they're on the call, yes, sir.
21	Q. Do you think that you were appropriately
22	punished for everything you did to Mr. Griffin?
23	A. Not this is like I said, this is the
24	first time I've looked at all this. I'd like to read
25	it over before I give a complete answer on that

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. Okay. That's fair.
2	How many times have you been investigated by
3	OPS?
4	A. A few times. I can't count the number. I
5	mean, I can't give you exact number right now. A
6	ballpark figure? I want to say somewhere around three
7	to five maybe.
8	Q. And of those of those OPS investigations,
9	how many of them were for the use of force?
10	A. That, I don't know.
11	Q. Was it it was more than one, though.
12	Right?
13	A. That's correct.
14	Q. Let's talk about Ricky Usher. Do you do
15	you recall an OPS investigation into one of your
16	interactions with a man named Ricky Usher?
17	A. I do.
18	Q. What happened with Mr. Usher?
19	A. You want the whole incident?
20	Q. You can give me an abbreviated version, just
21	beginning with the his allegations of excessive
22	force. Or whatever you whatever you want to
23	A. The complaint came that was my second
24	time dealing with Ricky Usher on the same violation.
25	It was a City charge at the time. I don't remember

exactly what the charge was. But he pretty much told me he wasn't going to go to jail. I end up having to use my OC spray on him.

To give you an idea how big Ricky Usher is, he's a -- he's a lot taller than I am and outweighs me by 100 pounds.

While I was trying to get him detained, I sprayed him. He had a female friend -- I want to say it was his girlfriend -- came from behind me and pushed me at the same time. She tried again, but I sprayed in her direction. And she stayed away from the spray, and that kept her away from me in time to take Mr. Usher to the ground.

While Mr. Usher was in handcuffs and I was trying to get him to a car, he was able to use his back to throw me up against the back and top of a police car. As I came down on the ground, I grabbed his feet. And when his feet went out from under him, he hit the ground. And I was able to struggle to get him into the back of a patrol car.

And he was transported to -- I think he went to -- straight to jail. I don't think he had any injuries. I think he went straight to jail. I can't remember that part.

We went to court on it. Took the judge

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about anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes to say that he was tired of hearing Ricky and his girlfriend's lies. The judge straight up said, "I hear that enough." he charged them both with guilty and even fined the female, who I did not charge. It took OPS quite a while to close out the case. And fast-forward some years later; I meet Ricky Usher outside a -- well, he's outside a, you know -- outside a -- I was working at a shelter, a warming shelter for the City. Ricky Usher just happened to be working for the City too. He came up to me and told me that he's working for the City now and he's not what he used to Whether that was true or not, I don't know. be. But that's the story. All right. Ο. And I was given not sustained on that. Α. O. Did you use your foot to push Mr. Usher into the vehicle after he was already handcuffed? That was one of the things that -- his Α. complaints were -- that I used my foot. I think he --I believe he accused me of kicking him in the head. That was a pretty big struggle. And I didn't want the

fact that my foot may have touched his head -- even

though it may not have been a kick, I didn't want

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers

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1 people to perceive it as a kick. So for there, I 2 couldn't recall. 3 Did I use my foot to shove Ricky in the back 4 of a patrol car? If that's what it took, I don't 5 know. 6 O. All right. Can you see Plaintiff's 7 Exhibit 53 on your screen? 8 Α. Yes, I can. 9 O. Have you ever seen this document before? 10 That, I don't know. Is this from Ricky? Α. 11 Q. Yes. 12 No, I have not seen this document. Α. informed by the chief at the time -- the deputy 13 14 chief -- that it was going to be not sustained. 15 Do you see where it says that you were O. 16 sustained for use of unnecessary force? 17 I see it now. Α. 18 O. I take it you disagree with that finding. 19 100 percent. Α. 20 Ο. All right. Can you -- can you see 21 Plaintiff's Exhibit 54 on your screen? 22 Α. Yes, sir, I can. 23 So these are -- these -- or this at least Ο. 24 includes the witness statements from the 25 investigation. I want to ask you about a few things

Donald Vickers

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1 Go to the second page. in here. 2 All right. Do you see -- let me -- do you 3 see that highlighted text that says "Ms. Williams said 4 Officer Vickers told Mr. Usher, 'Hey, motherfucker, 5 come here. I'm talking to you.' Ms. Williams said 6 Officer Vickers repeated this statement twice and then 7 grabbed Mr. Usher from behind and started choking 8 him." 9 Did I read that correctly? 10 I see the statement. Yes, sir. Α. 11 Did you, in fact, say, "Hey, motherfucker, Q. 12 come here, " to Mr. Usher? 13 That, I can't recall. I can tell you Α. 14 that -- that, I can't recall. 15 Let me -- well, let me ask you this: Ο. 16 that an appropriate way for a police officer to speak 17 to a citizen? If you are a criminal and "sir" and "ma'am" 18 Α. 19 was not working, but then all of a sudden I used those 20 words and it works, I think it's appropriate. 21 O. All right. Do you see the highlighted text 22 that says "Mr. Usher said, without any warning, even 23 though he did state that Officer Vickers told him to 24 stop, Officer Vickers came up behind him and tried to

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put him in a chokehold. However, he was able to shake

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 Officer Vickers off of him"? 2 Yes, sir, I see that. 3 Ο. Is that -- is that a true statement? 4 No, sir. And it doesn't make sense. Α. 5 Ο. All right. Do you see where it says that 6 you said, "Get up you fat, black piece of shit and get 7 in the car"? 8 Yes, sir, I see that. Α. 9 Ο. Did you, in fact, say those words? Absolutely not. 10 Α. 11 Why do you think Mr. Usher said that you Q. 12 said that? Because at that time, I guess, he was a 13 Α. 14 no-good person. And the reason I can recall it is 15 because I remember that was one of the allegations 16 that he had against me with the internal affairs. 17 I remember he went to court with that same allegation. And that's -- it stuck with me for a while. 18 19 Do you see where it says "Officer Vickers Ο. 20 kicked him approximately four or five times on both 21 his right and left side and then the left side of his 22 chest and back, causing soreness in his ribs"? 23 Α. Yes, sir, I see that. 24 Ο. Is that true? 25 That's absolutely false. If, in fact, my А.

Donald Vickers

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1 foot ever made contact with Ricky, it was never more 2 than once. Sir, can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 52 on 3 Ο. 4 your screen? 5 Α. Yes, sir, I can. 6 O. Have you ever seen Plaintiff's Exhibit 52? 7 Α. I don't believe so. Is this still regarding 8 Ricky Usher? 9 O. It is. I can see the -- no, sir, I don't recall 10 Α. 11 ever seeing this. 12 It -- does it appear that Plaintiff's 50- --13 Plaintiff's Exhibit 52 is a document recommending that 14 you be suspended for five days for your use of 15 excessive force? 16 Yes, sir. It says that. 17 And were you, in fact, suspended after the Q. 18 investigation into Mr. Usher's complaints? 19 Α. No, sir, I was not. 20 So you were not suspended for any period of 21 time after Mr. Usher complained that you used 22 excessive force against him? 23 Α. No, sir, I was not suspended. 24 Q. Okay. Have you ever seen Plaintiff's 25 Exhibit 58 before? And this is an internal memo

1	requesting that the final disposition be changed from
2	sustained to not sustained regarding Ricky Usher.
3	A. Okay. I don't recall this letter, but the
4	sustained to not sustained sounds more familiar to me.
5	Q. Is it normal for a deputy chief or any other
6	employee of the City of Atlanta to change the final
7	disposition after an OPS investigation?
8	MS. MILLER: Objection.
9	But you can answer if you know.
10	A. That, I don't know, sir. I really don't.
11	BY MR. KAHN:
12	Q. Have you ever heard of something like that
13	before?
14	A. I mean, what comes from OPS is my
15	understanding, that's a proposed action. It's up to
16	the chief to actually hand it out or not.
17	Q. Do you have any idea why the deputy chief
18	changed your disposition from sustained to not
19	sustained?
20	A. I guess through further investigation it was
21	determined that I didn't do it, that the allegations
22	were false.
23	Q. Do you know that, or are you or are you
24	guessing?
25	A. Well, I met with the deputy chief, and we

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discussed it, and that's what he said. So . . .

- Q. So you're friendly with Deputy Chief Finley?

  MS. MILLER: Objection.
- A. No, I'm not.

MS. MILLER: But you can answer.

A. I worked underneath him. I worked underneath him, sir.

BY MR. KAHN:

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- Q. Have you ever, you know, grabbed a beer with Deputy Chief Finley?
- A. I've never seen him out- -- if I saw him outside of work, it's because I live in the same zone that I work. But we never went out and hung out together, no, sir.
- Q. Did you ever thank him for changing the disposition from sustained to not sustained?
- A. In a roundabout way I did say thank you; however, I was actually hoping for exonerated.
- Q. What was this -- you said you spoke to Deputy Chief Finley about the investigation. What was that -- tell me about that conversation.
- A. Well, OPS did -- they handled, I guess, the complaint, and then they forwarded it up to the chief.

  And I had to go meet with the chief to -- because they were issuing out five days, and only the chief can do

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1	that.
2	And there was a statement that was made that
3	it must be my statement, but luckily I had the
4	original statement from the beginning. It was not the
5	correct statement. I don't know what the means was
6	behind it or whatever, but I gave my original
7	statement. He knew my actions, and he determined his
8	findings.
9	Q. Do you recall and we've been going for a
10	while now. Are you are you okay to keep going?
11	MR. KAHN: Does anyone need a restroom break
12	or anything?
13	MS. MILLER: I'm fine to keep going if
14	SPO Vickers is.
15	MR. KAHN: You're good to go? All right.
16	Well, let's
17	THE WITNESS: Keep going.
18	MR. KAHN: keep going. All rightee.
19	BY MR. KAHN:
20	Q. Sir, do you recall an incident in which you
21	aimed an assault rifle at several young men at the
22	Underground Atlanta?
23	A. I remember pulling out an assault rifle in
24	Underground Atlanta. I never aimed it at anybody.
25	Q. What happened there?

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I was out of work due to an injury, a shattered elbow, due to work-related causes. My girlfriend at the time, who is now my wife, was working at the Underground. Like I said, I worked and lived in the same zone. Underground was real close to it. So instead of her paying for parking, I told her I'd pick her up after work. Well, I fell asleep. Didn't hear the phone Woke up late. Rushed out the door. Grabbed my keys, my badge, and put them in the jeans I was wearing, and I ran out the door to go get her. It's only a few blocks away. As I was going to Underground Atlanta, there's a turnaround -- a turnabout. I was witnessing four security guards, unarmed, pushing and shoving three other guys. After they shoved the guys and pushed the guys off the property -- or at least out of the -- the hangout area where everybody was, you know, partying and drinking and stuff, the three guys started making threats. And one security guard, who was unarmed, told the guys, "Hey, go get your guns," or whatever. You know, "I'll be right here." Well, two of the guys stayed. They're telling the other guy, "Go get the guns." One guy

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

acts like he's leaving. I reached down for my phone; realized I didn't have my phone.

The security guards can see me, the way I'm positioned, but the three guys cannot. I put my badge up at the window or put it around my neck so they can see through the window. I tapped it. They give me a nod. I get out. I go to my trunk. I grab my rifle with one hand, turn the light on so it lights the rifle up so that they can see it, and told the guys, "Hey" -- once I got the three guys' attention, I told them, "Look, I don't want anything. Just leave."

They took off. I walked to the security guards. I asked them if they could -- I made sure they were all right. And I said, "Hey, can you just walk me to the bar that my girlfriend works at."

Because I know how it looked. You know, you can't see the badge. All you see is a white T-shirt and jeans.

And they were like, "Sure."

So one of them walked with me. When I got down there, there was nobody at the front. So I had to leave. Go back home. I grabbed my phone, and that's when I made the phone call to my girlfriend. And she had already started walking. I went to pick her up.

And at that time I was friendly with the cops around. They knew my car and stuff. And they didn't realize it was me. I got pulled over. We all talked about it. And then one brand-new lieutenant decided to take it further, and he tried to put charges on me.

- Q. Were you arrested?
- A. Those charges never made it to court.

He tried to arrest me. He -- it's -- what he did was completely wrong. To put a reckless conduct charge on somebody, you have to arrest them. You have to make a physical arrest. I'm a reckless conduct person; you got to lock me up. You got to take me to jail.

Well, after spending all night letting them draw my blood and giving a urine test to make sure I wasn't drinking and everything, they didn't even get a statement from me. He finally decided that he was going to put charges on me. So he wrote a ticket. He said, "Don't worry. I'm not taking you to jail." And I told him, "You have to."

Well, that ticket -- long story short, another officer knew that it was -- it wasn't going to work either. So he forced an officer to take the ticket to jail. Here it is, I'm thinking I'm going to

have to see myself in court to plead on this case.

And the courts never accepted it. The jail never accepted the ticket or anything. I paid for a lawyer I didn't need. I never saw the inside of a jail. I never saw the inside of a courtroom.

And then it was later determined that the only thing that they could get me on was the fact that, because I put the badge around my neck, it identified myself as a police officer, and at that time I was not rightfully certified; so I broke a policy. And they gave me -- I don't remember what the punishment was for that.

Q. All right. Well, thank you.

At any point did you -- did you chamber a round into the rifle?

A. No, sir, I did not chamber a round. That was brought up several times. The AR-15 has a charging handle that you use to chamber a round. When I pulled the rifle and I pointed it up to the sky, the charging handle fell down. It came unstacked, and I popped it back up in place.

I guess somebody thought I chambered a round. Even still, no crime committed. But it didn't happen.

Q. Did you verbally identify yourself as a

1 police officer to anyone?

- A. No. The security guards knew me. They knew my girlfriend. I didn't know they knew me. When I put the badge around and I tapped it so that they could see it and -- you know, show that, hey, I'm a friendly. I'm a police. They saw the badge; they knew who I was. And I later found out one of them did actually know me.
- Q. But after this ordeal, did you then walk through Underground Atlanta with a assault rifle in your hand?
- A. There is a passage that you use to get to the bar. I walked through that passage. This is when most of the bars are closed. There's only a few people out.

I tried not to make a big scene. But once I got to the window where the bar is -- the bar front -- I could see that there was nobody in the front, and I didn't want to bang on the glass to cause more disturbance. That's when I turned around and said, "Hey, I'll just go back and get my phone." And that's what I did.

- Q. Officer Vickers, can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 56 on your screen?
- 25 A. I can.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. And this Plaintiff's Exhibit 56 shows
2	that you were suspended for three days as a result of
3	the Underground Atlanta incident. Is that right?
4	A. I don't think I was suspended three days.
5	Q. How long were you suspended?
6	A. I can't recall, but I don't think I I
7	don't think I got suspended three days.
8	Q. Other than
9	A. The "Conduct" was dropped.
10	Q. I see. Other than Tyler Griffin and Ricky
11	Usher, have there been any other complaints against
12	you for the use of success excessive force?
13	A. One that I recall, and I don't know the
14	guy's name. He did not complain on me. A third-party
15	person did. And that's going to the civilian review
15 16	person did. And that's going to the civilian review board right now. No investigation was done ON that
16	board right now. No investigation was done ON that
16 17	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.
16 17 18	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a
16 17 18 19	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a quick break and reconvene at 2:10.
16 17 18 19 20	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a quick break and reconvene at 2:10.  MS. MILLER: Okay.
16 17 18 19 20 21	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a quick break and reconvene at 2:10.  MS. MILLER: Okay.  MR. KAHN: All right. I thank you-all.
16 17 18 19 20 21 22	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a quick break and reconvene at 2:10.  MS. MILLER: Okay.  MR. KAHN: All right. I thank you-all.  (OFF THE RECORD 2:04-2:13 P.M.)
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	board right now. No investigation was done ON that case.  MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. Let's take a quick break and reconvene at 2:10.  MS. MILLER: Okay.  MR. KAHN: All right. I thank you-all.  (OFF THE RECORD 2:04-2:13 P.M.)  BY MR. KAHN:

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## A. Yes, sir, I can.

Q. Okay. Great. I just want to -- we can probably make this pretty quick. I just want to know basically what you remember about each of these, these incidents. So I guess I -- we'll just go through them one at a time. Can -- let me pull it up so it's -- you can see it better.

What -- do you see the first citizen's -- citizen complaint that is listed on the disciplinary history?

- A. Yes, sir, I do.
- O. What was -- what was that about?
- A. I see the date, but I could not tell you what complaint that is. I don't -- I have no idea.
- Q. Do you see the -- you see the second complaint, the internal complaint?
  - A. Yeah, I see the internal complaint.
- Q. It looks like there was -- that was just regarding absence, like, an absence from duty, meaning, like, you missed a day of work or something?
- A. Yes, sir. With just the dates, I don't know. It's hard for me to remember last week. I'm sorry. I -- with just the dates alone, it's going to be hard for me to explain any of this.
  - Q. Okay. That's fair.

Donald Vickers

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1
               You know what? We'll just -- we'll skip --
 2
    we'll skip this part.
 3
               Does the name -- the names Tyler and Ashley
 4
    Toomer mean anything to you?
 5
         Α.
               Tyler and Ashley?
 6
         O.
               Toomer, T-o-o-m-e-r.
 7
         Α.
               I don't know why -- I kind of recognize the
8
    name, but I don't know why.
9
          Ο.
               Okay. So I'm going to pull up Plaintiff's
10
    Exhibit 57. Can you see that on your screen?
11
               Yes, sir, I see 57.
         Α.
12
               All right. So if you'll see at the bottom,
          Ο.
    Plaintiff's Exhibit 57 is an e-mail from the Atlanta
13
14
    Citizens Review Board investigating an allegation of
15
    misconduct.
16
               Do you see that highlighted text?
17
               Yes, sir, I do.
         Α.
18
               Can you tell me what is this -- what's this
         Ο.
19
    incident on August 6th, 2016?
20
                      This one I recall. I believe I --
         Α.
               Okav.
21
    this is one I've been waiting on for a while now.
                                                         Ι
22
    believe it's Tyler -- I'm not sure -- was a male
23
    suspect at the time. He was at a gas station. He
24
    tore the gas station apart. Tore the parking lot a
25
          He dumped all the trash that was in the parking
    lot.
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lot out of the trash cans and everything, because the store clerk wouldn't give him some money or let him in the store.

He then busted out the store clerk's window.

And in the process, he cut his arm somewhere. I can't remember where, but he cut his arm. Nothing severe, but it was bleeding.

I arrived. He was still on scene. Didn't understand exactly what was going on. I detained him. The store clerk came out to me and said, "Look, man, you got to help me out, but I don't want to prosecute."

I'm, like, "Well, I can't just charge him if you're not going to prosecute." And I was, like, "Well, I got to run him anyway to see who I'm dealing with."

Just so happened when I ran him, he came back with a warrant. I said, "Look, you don't want to prosecute him. I'll just take him in on the warrant."

I don't remember what the warrant was for.

But because he was bleeding -- it -- like I said, it wasn't -- it wasn't nothing big. He didn't want to go to the hospital. I was like -- but I knew the jails weren't going to take him with him bleeding a little bit. So I took him to Grady.

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While at Grady, he started acting out. Got -- using lot of profanity towards the nurses. a thing against womens -- womens -- females. He kept claiming he was some kind of big old original gangster rapper, whatever. And he was just making a big old scene to the point where the nurse that's supposed to check him in and get his vitals and stuff -- she's, like, "I can't even deal with him. Just take him straight to the back." So I took him to the back to the -- to the corrections area where they detain all the people at Grady. While back there, he encountered some more females. And I was holding his arm because he was intoxicated. I was holding his arm, walking him. policy, I had my hands on the suspect, you know. Well, he pushed his shoulder away from me and then pulled it back into me, knocking my body camera off, shoving me a little bit. He was a little It didn't do much damage to me. But it knocked quy. my camera on the ground. I realized, you know, he's going to continue to mess up. They pointed to the door I needed to take him to. The door's one of those push doors that's got the bar in the middle and you push it, and it's supposed to open up. Well, I didn't know that it was

1	locked. So, you know, I grab him up, and we're
2	marching to the door. And we both hit the door, but
3	because he's so light and drunk, he falls on the
4	ground.
5	He's not hurt. But he starts apologizing.
6	"I'm sorry. I'm sorry."
7	And I told him, "Hey, all right. No
8	worries. I got you at the hospital. You're hurt."
9	He goes, "No. I'm sorry. I'm sorry."
10	I told him, "Fresh start." I said, "Let me
11	get you up." I got him up. We put him back there so
12	they he could get treatment for his little cut and
13	sober up.
14	While I was back there, couple corrections
15	officers came to me and said, "Look, make sure you do
16	a report. We got a lady down at the end she hates
17	law enforcement. She's complained on everybody here.
18	She's going to make a complaint."
19	I said, "No worries. Thank you."
20	Grady has cameras. All of that was on
21	video.
22	I poked my head out the door, and sure
23	enough I looked at the lady, and it appeared to me she
24	was burning a hole through me. So I made sure to go
25	do a report, let a supervisor know and everything.

1 I had a doctor on the scene who was shaking 2 his head "yes" at me, like, no problem. He says he's 3 not hurt, you know. 4 Few days later that lady did complain. 5 Well, I don't know when she complained, but it came 6 back to me a few days later. Went to internal 7 affairs. And I said, "Okay. Well, go pull the 8 cameras up. Go speak to all the witnesses." 9 She claimed that I knocked the guy out. 10 That I rammed him into the door, knocking him 11 unconscious. And that was it. 12 Ο. Sure. So there's no doctor that revived him. 13 14 Q. Officer Vickers, I think -- I think there 15 may -- we may be confusing two different events. 16 this is the -- the one that you just described -- so 17 I'm going to pull up -- if you'll give me just a 18 minute here. 19 Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit A on your 20 screen? 21 Α. I can. So this is a -- and we'll go through some of 22 Q. 23 this stuff. This is about 60 pages of documents that 24 the City produced to us last night, you know, a few 25 hours before your deposition. And so -- and this --

Donald Vickers

1	all these documents relate to Willie Thurmond, who I
2	believe is the individual that you have been talking
3	about.
4	A. Okay. Yeah. That's who I was talking
5	about.
6	Q. Yeah.
7	A. I apologize.
8	Q. So we'll go I've got some follow-up
9	questions on that, and we'll go through those, and
10	then we'll go back to the other one since you already
11	started talking about it.
12	So, obviously, you recall the incident. You
13	told me what happened. When Mr. Thurmond ran into the
14	door or was pushed into the door, however you want to
15	call it, was he handcuffed?
16	A. Yes, sir.
17	Q. All right. I want to I'm going to flip
18	to page 8 in this document. So we're looking at
19	page 8 of these of Plaintiff's Exhibit A, which
20	appears to be a notice of final adverse action
21	suggesting a two-day suspension. Is that do you
22	agree with that?
23	A. I disagree. That's I'm fighting that.
24	Q. I'm sorry. Is this is that what this
25	document appears to be?

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers 10/21/2020

A. Yeah. Yes. That's the document, yes, sir.

- Q. And so as I understand it, you have not, in fact, been suspended for this alleged violation.
- A. No. I was suspended. The chief at the time over our unit -- even though there was no investigation done. By the time they did an investigation, the camera feed had been -- they waited way past 14 days to go do any kind of pick up of the surveillance. They didn't talk to any witnesses. They didn't get statements from anybody. They said just go ahead and give me the two days and let me fight it in the civilian reviewer -- review --
- 13 Q. Okay.
- A. -- board. So that's --
- 15 Q. So you were --
- 16 A. -- what that is.
- Q. So you were -- you were found to have used excessive force and suspended for that. Is that
- 19 | right?

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- 20 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And then you're just -- and you're --
- 22 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. -- in the process of fighting it on the back
- 24 end. Is that correct? That's correct?
- 25 A. That's correct.

1 Look at -- look at page 14. So here's a --O. 2 this is another -- what appears to be another final 3 adverse action related to the same incident, but it 4 says not sustained. Have you ever seen this? 5 Α. I don't think so, sir. 6 O. So you don't have any idea which of the ones 7 that we just looked at is the actual final -- final 8 notice? 9 And what I'm think- -- what I'm thinking is 10 internal affairs, OPS -- they send it up as not 11 sustained, but when it hit the chief's desk, he 12 changed it. 13 I see. All right, I'm going to flip to Ο. 14 page 19 here. Do you see the -- do you see the 15 highlighted text on this document, which is Bates 16 label 001059, that says "After reviewing the 17 above-mentioned OPS investigative file involving 18 Officer Vickers, I do not agree with the sustaining of 19 Work Rule 4.2.33"? 20 Α. Yes, sir. 21 Ο. So again -- I want to ask this again. I 22 asked you earlier. Is it -- would you say it's 23 normal -- it's a normal occurrence for a 24 higher-ranking officer to recommend that an OPS 25 finding be changed from sustained to not sustained or

Donald Vickers

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1
    exonerated?
               MS. MILLER:
 2
                            Objection.
 3
               But you can answer if you know.
 4
               Like I said, it's -- to the best of my
         Α.
 5
    knowledge, it's up to OPS to do their part of the
    investigation, and it gets forwarded up to their chain
 6
 7
    of command. Their chain of command is supposed to
 8
    look it over and agree or disagree with it and have
 9
    their ruling.
    BY MR. KAHN:
10
11
          Q.
               I see.
12
               Like, in this chain of command, the major
13
    disagreed with OPS.
14
          Q.
               So OPS serves as an independent body to
15
    investigate police misconduct.
                                     Right?
16
          Α.
               I'm sorry. Could you say that again?
17
                      Would you -- would you agree that OPS
          Ο.
               Sure.
18
    serves as an independent body to investigate police
    misconduct, among other things?
19
20
          Α.
               Yes, sir, I do.
21
          Ο.
               So why is it okay for someone who works
22
    directly with an officer to change a finding of an
23
    independent OPS investigation?
24
                            Objection.
               MS. MILLER:
25
               But you can answer if you know.
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Donald Vickers

1	A. So I can't really answer your question,
2	because these are all higher-ups. That's my major.
3	He has a office of his own. The people that work
4	directly underneath him are the captains, the
5	lieutenants, and the sergeants. I'm right at the
6	bottom of the totem pole.
7	This was a
8	BY MR. KAHN:
9	Q. I see.
10	A letter that it looks like he sent. After
11	OPS said not sustained, the chief came back and said,
12	"No. Go ahead and sustain it." And the major, after
13	looking at it, who has a lot of investigative
14	experience, wrote a letter back.
15	Q. Okay.
16	A. Obviously, they didn't agree with the chief.
17	so
18	Q. Would you agree that the practice of
19	allowing City of Atlanta employees outside of OPS to
20	change the final disposition of an investigation
21	leaves room for police officers to sort of look out
22	for their own?
23	A. No, sir. These are these this chain
24	of command they're all appointed. They're all
25	appointed positions. OPS they have their chain of

**Donald Vickers** 

1	command as well, and then it goes up.
2	Q. But this is this
3	A. So
4	Q isn't the first time that we've seen a
5	document with a higher-up recommending that one of
б	your excessive force violations be changed to not
7	sustained, is it?
8	MS. MILLER: Objection. I don't think that
9	this was an excessive force violation, and it even
10	said so in the document.
11	MR. KAHN: Okay. I your objection is
12	noted.
13	BY MR. KAHN:
14	Q. Officer Vickers, if you'd like to answer the
15	question, you're free to do so.
16	A. Can you ask the question again?
17	Q. This isn't the first document that we've
18	seen recommending one of your violations involving
19	excessive force be changed from not sustained or
20	excuse me to be changed from sustained to not
21	sustained, is it?
22	MS. MILLER: Same objection.
23	But you can answer.
24	A. Yeah. I mean, you can say that the chain of
25	command changes some of the rulings sometimes. Yeah.

BY MR. KAHN:

- Q. What's the point of OPS if the chain of command can just overturn it after an investigation?
- A. It's really for not for me to answer that.

  But, to the best of my knowledge, it's no different
  than you have an investigator and then they have their
  chain of command. No investigator -- sorry. It said
  "unstable." I don't know if you can hear me or not.

You have investigators, and they have their chain of command. The investigators come up with it, and their supervisors have to okay it. Hey, I agree with the findings. I don't agree with the findings. Hey, why didn't you do this. Why didn't you do that, you know. So, I mean, that's the only way I can answer your question.

Q. Okay. I'm going to flip to page 32. Can you see the highlighted text of this e-mail? It says "The officer was clearly mad about it and became aggressive toward the patient, and that's when he went full force into the locked door with the patient. And as a result, the patient fell to the floor and" -- it's a spelling error -- but "loss consciousness for a minute."

## A. I can't --

MS. MILLER: The document wasn't on the

Donald Vickers

1	screen. I'm sorry.
2	A. I can't see it.
3	BY MR. KAHN:
4	Q. That is my fault. I'll redo the question.
5	So do you see, Officer Vickers, where it
6	says "The officer was clearly mad about it and became
7	aggressive toward the patient, and that's when he went
8	full force into the locked door with the patient. And
9	as a result, the patient fell to the floor and loss
10	consciousness for a minute"?
11	A. Yeah, I see it.
12	Q. Is that is any of that true?
13	A. No, sir.
14	Q. Do you know do you do you know
15	anything about the person who complained about this
16	incident?
17	A. If it's who I think it is, she was at the
18	other end of a very, very big room, and that room was
19	full of people. All I know is, from the other
20	correction officers, they knew right away, because
21	they've had dealings with her before, that she was
22	going to be a problem for me.
23	Q. Well, was she an employee of Grady?
24	A. I'm only assuming by the way she was dressed
25	and the position that I mean where she was

1	standing. I'm thinking she was some kind of social
2	worker, but I have no idea who she was.
3	Q. Okay. And what do you how was she
4	dressed?
5	A. I can't remember, but she wasn't, like, in a
6	nurse's outfit or anything like that. It was it
7	was more like civilian clothes, like, just normal, you
8	know business wear.
9	Q. I see. Well, why do you think she said that
10	the man lost consciousness if he didn't, in fact, lose
11	consciousness?
12	MS. MILLER: Objection.
13	But you can answer if you know.
14	A. I don't know why she said any of those lies
15	she said. And if I tried to guess, it would be
16	speculating, and I couldn't diagnose it.
17	BY MR. KAHN:
18	Q. Okay.
19	A. It was all false. And, you know, like I
20	said, he was unconscious and we're in a hospital and
21	nobody revived him. Where is the doctor that had to
22	revive him?
23	Q. All right. Go back to Plaintiff's
24	Exhibit 57. So that was the incident that we just
25	spoke about was Willie Thurmond. Do you have any idea

what this highlighted incident is referring to? 1 2 I know the location, but, no, I don't know 3 the incident. I'm sorry. 4 Okay. Did -- have -- has there been any --Ο. 5 well, I guess strike that. 6 So we've spoken about Willie Thurmond, Tyler Griffin, and Ricky Usher, which are three cases that 7 8 involve the use of force. Other than those three cases, are there any other instances where you've been 9 10 accused of using too much force? 11 Other than the ones we talked about, not Α. 12 that I can recall. 13 Did any of the -- other than Mr. Griffin, Ο. 14 did any of the other people who accused you of using 15 too much force -- did any of those people file 16 lawsuits against you? 17 Α. Not that I'm aware of. Has the City of Atlanta cautioned you at all 18 O. 19 since Mr. Griffin's complaint against you? 20 MS. MILLER: Objection. 21 But you can -- you can -- I'm sorry. 22 The City of Atlanta? Who are you speaking 23 about? 24 MR. KAHN: I'm talking about the City of 25 I don't really know how I could be clearer Atlanta.

Donald Vickers

```
1
    than that.
 2
              MS. MILLER: Are you talking about his
 3
    attorneys? Are you talking about APD? What -- I'm
 4
    not sure. So I'm -- I don't know if he can answer
 5
    that question or not.
              MR. KAHN: Ms. Miller, I understand that you
 6
 7
    may not understand it, but really you're not being
8
    deposed right now. Officer Vickers is. And what
9
    really matters is if he understands it. And so if he
10
    understands it, he's free to answer that question.
                                                         Ιf
11
    he does not understand it, as you have basically
12
    instructed him, then I'm happy to reask it in a way
13
    that he understands.
14
              MS. MILLER: Well, I was asking because I
15
    wanted to know if there -- if I had an objection or
16
          If it's not about the City attorneys' office,
17
    then that's fine. If it is, then I'm going to tell
18
    him not to answer. So that was my clarification.
19
              MR. KAHN: Of course I am not asking for
20
    attorney-client privileged information.
21
              MS. MILLER:
                            Thank you.
22
              MR. KAHN: So I'll ask the question again.
23
    BY MR. KAHN:
24
              Officers Vickers, has the City of Atlanta
         O.
25
    cautioned you at all since Mr. Griffin's complaint?
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Donald Vickers

1	A. Other than, you know, the incident what's
2	you know, what's coming out of it, I I'm not I'm
3	not sure I understand your question.
4	Q. Sure. Like, has the
5	A. Cautioned me in what way?
6	Q. Has the City said and of course I'm
7	paraphrasing. Has the City said, like, "Vickers, if
8	this happens again, you will be fired"?
9	A. Like I said, this case I see you have it,
10	but for me, they haven't come to me with all the
11	findings yet. So, like I said, I don't think they're
12	done dealing with me yet. So whatever caution they're
13	going to bring, I think that's yet to come.
14	Q. I see. All right. We are we are nearly
15	done, and I appreciate your patience, sir.
16	Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 33 on your
17	screen?
18	A. I can.
19	Q. And does Plaintiff's Exhibit 33 appear to be
20	your performance evaluation for 2019?
21	A. Yes, sir.
22	Q. And you see the evaluation period? It says
23	July 1st, 2018, through June 30th, 2019. That would
24	necessarily include the date that you tackled
25	Mr. Griffin. Right?

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Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

A. Yes, sir.

- Q. And so any comments or criticisms or really any, you know, commentary based on your conduct on April 5th towards Mr. Griffin, to the extent it would be noted at all, would be noted in this performance evaluation. Correct?
  - A. Yes, sir.
  - Q. All right. We'll flip to page 2.
- A. Actually, that's not (audio transmission failure).
  - Q. I'm sorry. What --
- A. That's not fair, because they would -- it's not correct because they -- the findings haven't come out yet. This was all done in 2019. So if anything was to come out of it, it -- they wouldn't be able to judge Griffin's case off this evaluation. Does -- I don't know if I'm being clear enough.

Even though the incident happened here, the investigation wasn't complete.

- Q. Sure. Well, let me ask you this: Did
  your -- the person reviewing this or rating -- the
  rater it appears was Sergeant J. Davis. Who is -- who
  is Sergeant J. Davis in relation to you?
- A. He's an old supervisor sergeant that I used to have. He's gone to another unit now.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. At the time that he completed this review on
2	6/30/19, was he aware of what happened with
3	Mr. Griffin?
4	MS. MILLER: Objection.
5	But you can answer if you know.
6	A. He became aware of it. Like I said, he
7	couldn't have he couldn't base the evaluation off
8	that incident completely, being that it was under
9	investigation. And also I don't know that he was the
10	sergeant at the time of the actual incident.
11	BY MR. KAHN:
12	Q. Okay. Can you see can you see Goal 1 on
13	your screen?
14	A. Yes, sir.
15	Q. And you see Goal 1 says C-A-R-E, "C.A.R.E.:
16	Represents the department in a courteous and
17	professional manner." Do you is that do you see
18	that?
19	A. Yes, sir.
20	Q. And under the goal there's a Comments
21	section. Do you see that area under the goal?
22	A. Yes, sir.
23	Q. Isn't it true that the person performing
24	this evaluation Sergeant Davis in this case can
25	put anything they want in that Comments section?

**Donald Vickers** 

1	A. Yes, sir.
2	Q. For example
3	A. That's their comments.
4	Q. Sure. Yeah. And, for example, if the
5	officer being evaluated was not courteous and not
б	professional, the reviewing employee could say that in
7	this Comments section. Right?
8	A. Yes, sir.
9	Q. And then in your case, it looks like
10	Sergeant Davis said "Works with a sense of urgency.
11	Treats everyone fairly and with respect."
12	Do you see that?
13	A. Yes, sir.
14	Q. And he gave you a 4 in that category. And
15	we'll scroll up, and 4 means "Highly effective.
16	Exceeds the expected performance standards on a
17	regular basis." Right?
18	A. Yes, sir.
19	Q. So if APD thought that you were not being
20	courteous and not being professional, they could have
21	said they could have said exactly that in this
22	Comments section.
23	MS. MILLER: Objection.
24	But you can answer.
25	A. Yes, sir.

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 BY MR. KAHN: 2 And then do you see the next comments -- the Ο. 3 next goal is 4, and it says "Professionalism"? 4 Α. Yes, sir, I see it. 5 And do you see the highlighted comment Ο. 6 underneath it? It says "Displays concern and empathy 7 with -- when interacting with citizens." 8 Α. Yes, sir. 9 Q. And do you think that that is a true statement about you? 10 11 Α. Yes, sir. 12 And do you -- do you remember when you said O. to Mr. Griffin, "We're laughing because you fell 13 14 pretty hard after pushing an officer, man. I find 15 that funny"? 16 Yes, sir, I remember it. 17 That's not very courteous or professional, Ο. 18 would you say? 19 I mean, it might not be nice, but I don't Α. 20 think it was out of line. 21 Ο. Sure. But do you think it was -- would you 22 describe that statement that you made as being 23 courteous? 24 Is it supernice? No. He just pushed an

officer.

25

I let him know he messed up. He made a

mistake.

- Q. Do you think that your statements to Mr. Griffin or about Mr. Griffin -- I guess they were to. Do you think that your statements to Mr. Griffin displayed empathy?
- A. Can you say it one more time? I want to make sure I hear it correctly.
- Q. Sure. Sure. So do you think that the statements that you made to Mr. Griffin -- those statements being "We're laughing because you fell pretty hard after pushing an officer, man. I find that funny, man" -- that statement -- do you think that that statement made to Mr. Griffin displayed empathy?
- A. I think me telling Mr. Griffin "I want to take care of you. I want to get you to the Grady as soon as possible" -- me holding Mr. Griffin up with another officer so that he's not putting all his weight on his leg -- I think that's showing empathy.

Letting him know, you know, there are certain things you can't do when it comes to law enforcement. When a officer tells you to do something and it's in the code of law, you need to do it. I think I'm empathy.

Q. Do you remember when you -- from the video

1	we watched earlier, when you told Mr. Griffin, "You're
2	such a little girl right now"?
3	A. Yeah. Something to that effect, yes, sir.
4	Q. Do you think do you think that that
5	statement displayed concern for Mr. Griffin?
6	A. It's letting him know, hey, you know, it's
7	not that serious. It's not it's not, you know
8	it's not that it's not going to be taken care of. I
9	assured him that I
10	Q. Do you think
11	A knew that he was in pain and that I
12	didn't want him to further injure him.
13	Q. Do you think that the that that statement
14	displays empathy for Mr. Griffin?
15	A. Along with as a whole, with everything
16	else, I think that there was plenty empathy there.
17	Q. That wasn't my question. I said do you
18	think that your statement that being "You're such a
19	little girl right now" do you think that that
20	statement displays empathy to Mr. Griffin?
21	A. That standalone statement, no.
22	Q. Do you think that you deserve this comment
23	in your performance review that says "Displays concern
24	and empathy when interacting with citizens"?
25	A. Absolutely.

Donald Vickers

1	Q. Would you ever testify against another
2	Atlanta police officer in an excessive force case?
3	A. If I saw excessive force, yes, I would make
4	sure something was done about it.
5	Q. But in your 15 years at the at the
6	department, you've never seen excessive force. Right?
7	A. No, sir.
8	Q. Would
9	A. And if I have, I surely cannot recall.
10	Q. Would you ever report another police officer
11	if you saw him or her do something you thought was
12	wrong?
13	A. There's different levels to that on how far
14	I think things need to go. But, you know, I
15	definitely want to make sure it's taken care of
	definitely want to make bute it is taken tale of
16	accordingly.
16 17	
	accordingly.
17	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's
17 18	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's generally frowned upon for a police officer to report
17 18 19	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's generally frowned upon for a police officer to report another police officer's misconduct?
17 18 19 20	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's generally frowned upon for a police officer to report another police officer's misconduct?  A. I think I misheard you. Could you say that
17 18 19 20 21	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's generally frowned upon for a police officer to report another police officer's misconduct?  A. I think I misheard you. Could you say that again?
17 18 19 20 21 22	accordingly.  Q. Well, I guess would you agree that it's generally frowned upon for a police officer to report another police officer's misconduct?  A. I think I misheard you. Could you say that again?  Q. Sure. Would you agree that it's generally

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correct, no.

- Q. Well, would you agree that police officers who testify against other police officers are ostracized?
  - A. I don't agree with that.
- Q. Have you ever heard of a police officer who testifies against another police officer or reports another police officer referred to as a rat or a snitch?
- A. I mean, I've heard the term "rat" or "snitch," but I've never heard it towards any police officer that I know.
  - Q. Have you ever heard -- have you ever --
- A. And I don't know anybody that would call a police officer a rat.
- Q. Have you ever heard anyone in the -- in the City of Atlanta Police Department criticize another police officer for reporting misconduct of another police officer?
  - A. No.
- Q. And, Mr. Vickers, you are under oath right now. You've never heard -- in your 15 years as a police officer, you've never heard another Atlanta police officer criticize another Atlanta police officer for reporting another police officer?

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

MS. MILLER: Objection. Asked and answered.

But you can answer again if -- you can

answer if you have something to add.

- A. You're asking if I witnessed it in -- say it one more time. I want to make sure you -- I hear -- BY MR. KAHN:
  - Q. Sure.
  - A. -- you correctly.
- Q. And I could -- I can just sort of explain what I'm asking instead of just repeating it -- the question again. And I'm happy to repeat it again.

  But I -- what I'm looking -- like, what I'm asking you about is, like, in your -- in your career as an officer, have you ever seen or been -- or participated in a conversation with another Atlanta police officer, or witnessed it, where, you know, somebody reported someone or testified against someone or told on someone or whatever and said something -- and someone or you or anyone said something negative about that person? Like, "Man, like, you know, screw John Smith. He told on Tony." You know, something like that.
- A. Okay. If you want to say negative -- if you want to use the term "negative" instead of calling them a snitch or a rat, yeah, I've heard -- I mean, I can't give you an example. I can't think of a time,

Donald Vickers

1	but I'm sure I've heard an officer, "Man, so-and-so
2	went to went to, you know, internal affairs or
3	whatever for this or that." And it might be, you
4	know, to their eyes, something petty or whatever.
5	Yeah, I've heard that.
6	Q. Okay. So then I guess it
7	A. But I can't think of it off the top
8	Q. Go ahead.
9	A of my head.
10	Q. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to cut you off.
11	It was just lagging a little bit.
12	A. That's all right. Off the top of my head, I
13	can't think of any.
14	Q. I gotcha.
15	A. Off the top of my head, I can't think of a
16	particular incident.
17	Q. Okay. That's fair.
18	So I guess, then, would it be fair to say,
19	then, that maybe I was just using the wrong words
20	before.
21	Would it be fair to say that there's sort of
22	like a culture within the City of Atlanta Police
23	Department that it's viewed negatively for another
24	police officer to sort of tell on another police
25	officer?

**Donald Vickers** 

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 Objection. MS. MILLER: But you can answer if you know. 2 3 I can only tell you what I know. And I Α. 4 think, because I've been around so long and I'm so --5 I'm pretty well known, that kind of stuff doesn't fly 6 So another officer wouldn't put that in my 7 direction for me to catch it. 8 BY MR. KAHN: 9 Ο. I see. 10 Α. So -- yeah. I --11 But I guess have you -- have you heard of --Q. 12 Α. If somebody does something wrong, then --I see. Have you heard of that -- you've 13 Ο. 14 heard of that sort of thing, though, just really 15 generally. Like, people complaining about other 16 people, like, reporting stuff. 17 Not officers. I mean, I can -- I mean --Α. 18 and, like I said, there's different levels of thing. 19 I mean, you know, rumors. This place is like any 20 other big corporation. There's a lot of rumors. 21 I mean, I heard a story where one of the 22 trainers at the academy was talking to a class, 23 training a class, did like that to -- you know, 24 touched the shoulder of another recruit. 25 got real offended about it. But that's just a story

Gillilli	vs. City of Atlanta Donald vickers 10/21/202
1	to me. I didn't witness it. I it's coming from
2	the fifth party. I don't you know, I can't put any
3	truth behind it.
4	Q. Sure.
5	A. It just doesn't happen in my element. Not
6	in my environment, not in my circle.
7	Q. In your well, in your experience with
8	APD, have you seen another police officer state on the
9	record that a fellow police officer used excessive
10	force?
11	A. You cut out on the first part. Can you say
12	it again?
13	Q. Oh, sure. In your experience with APD, have
14	you seen another police officer state on the record
15	that a fellow police officer used excessive force?
16	A. I'm sure I have, but I can't tell you when.
17	I can't think of a time. And, like I said, it was
18	nothing I witnessed.
19	Q. Okay. Have you heard of a department-wide
20	practice where officers refuse to bear witness against
21	a fellow officer who is alleged to have violated a
22	citizen's rights?
23	A. I'm sorry. One more time, please.
24	Q. You need me to repeat the question?
25	A. Please.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. Okay. Sure. Have you heard of a
2	department-wide practice where officers refuse to bear
3	witness against a fellow officer who is alleged to
4	have violated a citizen's rights?
5	A. No, sir, not in this department for sure.
6	Q. Have you ever heard of the phrase "the
7	police code of silence"?
8	A. I've heard the phrase. I don't buy into it.
9	Q. What is it what does that mean to you?
10	A. It means I I can't say it exists.
11	Q. All right. All right. Just a few more
12	questions.
13	Can you see Plaintiff's Exhibit 502?
14	A. I do.
15	Q. And so Plaintiff's Exhibit 502 it's an
16	excerpt from the Use of Force Advisory Council some
17	document that they put out which is a city
18	organization. Do you see up at the top where it says
19	" but there are lingering issues and
20	opportunities for improvement"?
21	A. Yes, sir, I see that.
22	Q. Would isn't that a nice way of saying
23	that there is a problem that needs to be fixed?
24	MS. MILLER: Objection.
25	But you can answer if you know.

1	A. I don't know anything about this article. I
2	don't know anything about this study. I can't speak
3	on it.
4	BY MR. KAHN:
5	Q. All right. Well, do you see where it says
6	"Despite declining arrests over the past 7 years,
7	reported annual use-of-force incidents have increased
8	on average 2 percent every year, with 615 total
9	incidents in 2019"?
10	A. I see it.
11	Q. Do you assuming that statistic to be
12	true, do you find that to be problematic?
13	A. If it's true, sure.
14	Q. If that if that statement if that fact
15	is true, would it be fair to say that there's a
16	systemic problem with police violence?
17	A. Not necessarily. Like I said, I'm not very
18	familiar with this article. But looking into it, one
19	of the answers to this 2 percent to this to the
20	seven over the past seven years, decline in reports
21	of arrest maybe it could have something to do with
22	the mentally challenged. I don't know.
23	Maybe instead of they're not being
24	arrested. Maybe they're sent to Grady 13. I don't
25	know that they're being charged. I don't know. I

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really can't speak on this article, sir.

Q. Sure. And I'm just -- I'm just asking you based on the statistic -- like, let's just -- let's -- we can take the article down.

Just, you know, sitting -- as we sit here today, assuming that every year there is a 2 percent increase in use-of-force incidents, does that suggest to you that there is a bigger-picture problem in play?

- A. If that article is correct, then, yes, there could be.
- Q. Has anyone you know, either through work or personally, said anything to you about the video of you tackling Mr. Griffin? And, obviously, that would exclude communications with your lawyers.
- A. You know, like I said, this place is like any other big organization. There's going to be rumors. People -- you know, they've made comments about it or statements about it, but nothing that I can really recall. I mean --
  - O. Sure.
  - A. -- not out of the ordinary.
- Q. What sort of comments or rumors have you -- have you heard?
  - A. You know, people -- "Hey, that was -- that was you on the media?"

1	"Yeah, that was me." You know, stuff like
2	that.
3	Q. Has anyone criticized your you know, seen
4	the video and criticized you?
5	A. No one's criticized me personally, you know.
6	To be honest with you, some people like the technique.
7	Q. What do you what do you mean by that?
8	A. Just when he had the threat, how actions
9	were taken swift and quickly and, you know, direct.
10	Q. So I guess
11	A. That's it.
12	Q. The way that I interpret that to what
13	that what I interpret that to mean and feel free
14	to correct me if it's wrong but what that means to
15	me is that you have been applauded by other police
16	officers for your use of force against Tyler Griffin.
17	Is that right?
18	A. Not applauded. Not applauded. I mean, we
19	don't we don't cheer when you hurt somebody or
20	anything like that. But the technique hey, you
21	know what? You were there. You were able to do
22	something about it. Good job. That that's it.
23	Q. Good job? Okay.
24	Has anyone has anyone told you that you
25	used too much force against Mr. Griffin?

**Donald Vickers** 

1	A. No.
2	Q. Are you embarrassed to have that video on
3	the news?
4	A. No, I'm not embarrassed.
5	Q. Are you proud of the that video?
6	A. No, I'm not proud of it.
7	Q. Do you have any regrets about the way that
8	you treated Mr. Griffin?
9	A. No, sir.
10	Q. Is there anything that you'd like to say to
11	Mr. Griffin on the record?
12	A. No, sir.
13	MR. KAHN: No further questions.
14	MS. MILLER: Okay. I do have a few
15	questions.
16	EXAMINATION
17	BY MS. MILLER:
18	Q. So, SPO Vickers, thanks again for being here
19	today. I know it's been quite a while, and I'll try
20	to make this as quick as possible.
21	I want to go back to your line of testimony
22	when you spoke about turning off your camera. Were
23	you near Mr. Griffin when you turned off your camera?
24	A. No. I don't think I was ever near him when
25	I cut my camera off.

**Donald Vickers** 

1	Q. Did you believe it was appropriate to turn
2	off your camera at that time?
3	A. As long as I was away from Mr. Griffin and I
4	wasn't dealing with him or affecting the case, I
5	didn't see an issue with it.
6	Q. Okay. And why did you believe that it was
7	appropriate to turn off your camera at that time if
8	you were away from Mr. Griffin?
9	A. I think if I was away from Mr. Griffin,
10	the charges were done. He was in handcuffs. We were
11	simply trying to expedite his transportation to Grady.
12	There was nothing that was going to affect his case or
13	our decision.
14	Q. Okay. Did you ever tell Mr. Griffin that
15	you did not want him to get hurt?
16	A. You broke out a little bit.
17	Q. Sure. I'll repeat the question.
18	Did you ever tell Mr. Griffin that you
19	didn't want him to get hurt further?
20	A. Yes. I made that clear.
21	Q. Okay. And was that actually, I'll pull
22	up Defendant's Exhibit 1. Let's see. I'll share my
23	screen.
24	Okay. And can you see a video on your
25	screen?
25	screen?

Donald Vickers

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1
              I can.
         Α.
 2
              Okay. And this is Exhibit -- Defendant's
 3
    Exhibit 1, which has been previously marked as
    Griffin v. COA -599.
 4
 5
              And I'm going to start about 3 minutes into
    the video. I'm at 3 minutes and 3 seconds. And I'm
6
 7
    going to play the video for a while and then ask you a
8
    few questions.
9
               (Video plays.)
10
              MR. KAHN: Staci, we can't hear any sound on
11
    this.
12
              MS. MILLER: You can't hear any sound?
13
              MR. KAHN: Unh-unh.
14
              MS. MILLER:
                            Okay. So let me try to share
15
    it again, then.
16
              MR. KAHN: So I actually just learned this
17
    yesterday, but apparently when you share the screen,
18
    there's, like, a little check box that gives you the
    option to share computer audio. And so that's what
19
20
    I've been doing.
21
              MS. MILLER: Okay. I thought that I clicked
22
    that.
           Let me try again. So let me stop sharing.
23
              Okay. Let me try to share it again. Okay.
24
    I'm going to go back to 3 minutes and 3 seconds.
25
    Okay.
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**Donald Vickers** 

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1
               (Video plays.)
 2
               MS. MILLER: Let me stop. Can you hear it
 3
    now?
 4
               MR. KAHN: Yes, I can.
 5
               MS. MILLER: Okay.
 6
         Α.
               I can.
 7
               (Video plays.)
 8
    BY MS. MILLER:
               So, Officer Vickers, at this time when you
 9
    were in the -- when you were at the scene, did you
10
11
    know what the injury to Mr. Griffin was?
12
         Α.
               I think I was -- I was in the midst of
    trying to find out. I didn't know his exact injury I
13
14
    don't think.
15
               Okay. I'll play a little bit more.
          Ο.
16
               (Video plays.)
17
    BY MS. MILLER:
               Did Mr. Griffin ever tell you that his ankle
18
          O.
19
    was broken?
20
         Α.
               No, ma'am.
21
          Ο.
               Okay.
22
         Α.
               I don't -- I don't believe -- I think -- he
23
    kept his saying leg, his ankle. We couldn't figure
24
    out what it was. At the time, I didn't know which one
25
    he was talking about.
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Donald Vickers

1	Q. Okay. And I'm going to move the video
2	forward a little bit, and then I'll have some more
3	questions for you.
4	A. Before you play it
5	Q. Um-hum.
6	A I got I got supervisors on the other
7	watch. Can I just I got to yell out this door real
8	quick. Okay? So just before you play this. Is
9	that okay?
10	Q. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. What did you say?
11	A. It's shift change. So there's people the
12	new supervisors they don't even know that I'm still
13	out. They're going to be looking for me. They're
14	going to think I'm on the streets, and they're going
15	to be trying to find me.
16	Q. Okay. So do we need to take a
17	A. No. I
18	Q take a quick break?
19	A. I just need 30 seconds. About 5 seconds.
20	Can I get 5 seconds real quick?
21	Q. Okay.
22	MR. KAHN: Yeah. That's fine. Fine by me.
23	Do what you need to do.
24	(Off-the-record discussion.)
25	

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**Donald Vickers** 

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1	BY MS. MILLER:
2	Q. I'm sorry. This was the wrong video. Okay.
3	So the next video let me stop sharing my screen.
4	Okay.
5	Okay. So after this first video that we

- A. Yes, ma'am, I did.
- Q. Okay. And did anyone else assist you in getting him to the wagon?
  - A. Yes, ma'am. Officer Simsell.

saw, did you help Mr. Griffin to the wagon?

- Q. Okay. Whose idea was it to bring the wagon down the driveway?
  - A. I believe that was my idea.
  - Q. Okay. And did you assist the wagon in getting down the driveway?
- 16 A. Yes, ma'am.
  - Q. And why did you do that?
  - A. Several reasons. One, I wanted to make sure the wagon driver got down there safe. And, two, I wanted to get the wagon as close to Mr. Griffin as I possibly could. That way he wouldn't have to walk. We could get him on his strong ankle and help him into the wagon.
  - Q. Okay. There was a line of questioning about the OPS investigation into this matter, and I believe

Omm	vs. City of Attained
1	your testimony was that you believe the use of force
2	should be sustained. Was that your testimony?
3	A. Yeah. I said that on mistake. I should
4	have said not sustained or exonerated. I was pushing
5	for exonerated.
6	Q. Okay. Why do you believe it should have
7	been not sustained or exonerated? And I'm talking
8	about the use of force in this particular instance.
9	A. Once again, going back to the very
10	beginning, Mr. Griffin came with a threat. There was
11	a danger there. Once I took action and put
12	Mr. Griffin down, that threat and danger were gone and
13	my use of force was gone. I only used that that
14	was that was called for.
15	Q. Okay. In your 15 years as a APD officer,
16	how many use-of-force complaints have you had against
17	you?
18	A. I believe it's three.
19	Q. Okay. And how many of those were sustained?
20	A. There was only one that's sustained that I'm
21	fighting.
22	Q. Okay. So to your knowledge, if there is a
23	investigation on use of force, there is if there is
24	a complaint of use of force, there is an investigation

25

into that matter. Is that correct?

Donald Vickers

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 Objection. It's leading. MR. KAHN: Yes, ma'am. 2 Α. 3 BY MS. MILLER: 4 Okay. And then after that investigation, is Ο. 5 there a discipline that you receive? 6 Α. Yes, ma'am. The investigators -- they -- I 7 guess they have a chart they go by, and depending on 8 the necessary force is what they go with as far as the discipline. 9 10 I am going to show you what I have Ο. Okay. 11 marked as Defendant's Exhibit 2. And this is OPS File 12 No. 17-C-0353UAF, which is the matter that we have 13 spoken about previously that involved Mr. Thurmond. 14 And I will pull that up. 15 Okay. Here we go. Share screen. 16 Okay. Can you see my screen? 17 Α. I can. 18 Okay. And I am at a page that has been O. 19 previously Bates-labeled Griffin versus COA 001043. 20 And I'm going to read to you from this particular 21 It says "Attached is OPS Complaint page. 22 Investigation No. 17-C-0353-UAF involving Officer 23 Donald Vickers. In reviewing the completed adverse 24 action, I do not concur with the disposition for Work 25 Rule 4.2.33 (Conformance to Directives) should be

Donald Vickers

```
1
    changed to not sustained."
 2
               Did I read that correctly?
 3
         Α.
               Yes, ma'am.
 4
               MR. KAHN: Objection. Leading.
5
    BY MS. MILLER:
6
         O.
               Okay. Do you know why Deputy Chief Glazier
 7
    asked Major Hampton not to sustain this particular
8
    charge?
9
         Α.
               I don't know.
               Okay. And --
10
         Q.
11
               This was --
         Α.
12
               Go ahead.
         Ο.
13
         Α.
              Well, yeah. He -- actually, I do.
14
    this case came from OPS. Went to my major.
15
    major -- well, it came to the chief. The chief sent
16
    it back down to the major to discipline me.
17
    major sent a letter back, like, "No.
18
    investigation was wrong," or whatever.
19
               Glazier -- this is a return letter, I guess,
20
    from Chief Glazier basically saying, "Hey, go ahead
21
    and just give him the time, and then let him fight it
22
    in the civilian review board." That's what I was --
23
         Q.
               Okay.
24
         Α.
               -- told.
25
               Okay. And, to your knowledge, is this
         Q.
```

**Donald Vickers** 

```
1
    charge a use-of-force charge or a conformance to
 2
    directives?
               MR. KAHN: Object to -- objection. Leading.
 3
 4
                      I mean, it's listed as conformance to
         Α.
               Yeah.
 5
    directives. What they were going off of, I don't
 6
    know.
 7
    BY MS. MILLER:
8
               Okay. So did this conformance to
         Q.
    direction -- conformance to directives decision have
9
10
    anything to do with your use of force?
11
               It doesn't appear that way, no, ma'am.
         Α.
12
               Okay. And then I'm going to share one more
         Ο.
13
    exhibit that we'll mark as Defendant's Exhibit 3.
14
               MR. KAHN:
                          I'm sorry. Ms. Miller, did you
15
    mark that whole -- all 58 pages as Defendant's
    Exhibit 2?
16
17
               MS. MILLER:
                            Yes.
18
              MR. KAHN:
                          Okay.
19
    BY MS. MILLER:
20
         Q.
               Okay.
21
               MR. KAHN: Let me just -- I just want to put
22
    something on the record while you're looking. I just
23
    want the record to reflect that Defendant's Exhibit 2
24
    is materially identical to Plaintiff's Exhibit A to
25
    the deposition, which are documents that were produced
```

**Donald Vickers** 

```
1
    last night less than -- you know, less than 12 hours
 2
    before the deposition.
 3
              MS. MILLER: And that's fine. I don't think
 4
    that they're identical now, because I think you had
 5
    some highlighting and different things. So I would
 6
    just like Defendant's Exhibit 2 to stand alone.
    Exhibit A can -- you can do what you would like --
 7
8
               MR. KAHN:
                          Sure.
9
               MS. MILLER: -- to do with --
10
              MR. KAHN: Yeah.
11
              MS. MILLER: -- that exhibit.
12
              MR. KAHN: Of course.
                                      Yeah.
13
                            Okay.
              MS. MILLER:
                                   Okay.
14
    BY MS. MILLER:
15
               I've got to share my screen. Okay.
         O.
16
               Okay. Defendant's Exhibit 3 is the OPS
17
    investigation into File No. 10-C-0324-UAF, and I am
18
    looking at page -- the page that has been previously
    Bates-numbered as Griffin v. COA 000777. Okay.
19
20
    I'm going to read starting at the second paragraph.
21
               So it says "After reviewing the contents of
22
    this investigative file and considering the
23
    information provided by Officer Vickers and his
24
    representative during the employee response session, I
    did not feel that the evidence contained in the
25
```

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers

1 investigative file supported and sustained charge as
2 recommended by OPS."

Do you know why Deputy Chief Finley made this statement to Major Dancy?

MR. KAHN: I'm going to just object to the form of that question.

7 BY MS. MILLER:

3

4

5

6

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

- Q. Okay. And you can answer.
- A. I believe he sent it because he saw the investigation. He's familiar with that area and the facts. He just knew the case. He knew that I -- through the years, him working over me, I guess he knew that that's not me. And through his investigation, he knew that I wouldn't do something like that. And there was no evidence to support any of it. I mean, even the judge saw it.
- MS. MILLER: Okay. If you'll just give me 30 seconds, I'm going to review my notes.
- Okay. Those are all the questions that I have for SPO Vickers.
- 21 FURTHER EXAMINATION
- 22 BY MR. KAHN:
- Q. All right. I just have a few questions, and then we'll let you get out of here. I know we've taken up enough of your day.

10/21/2020

Donald Vickers

1	Would you would you agree that police
2	officers should only use force if it's necessary?
3	A. Yes, sir.
4	Q. Will you agree that if required to use
5	force, police officers should only use reasonable
6	force?
7	A. Yes, sir.
8	Q. Would you agree that police officers should
9	attempt to deescalate a situation before using force?
10	A. If at all possible, yes, sir.
11	Q. Is it fair to say that an officer's
12	subjective belief that force is necessary standing
13	alone is not enough to justify the use of force?
14	MS. MILLER: Objection.
15	But you can answer if you know.
16	A. You'll have to repeat it. You broke up in
17	the middle of it.
18	BY MR. KAHN:
19	Q. Sure. Is it fair to say that an officer's
20	subjective belief that force is necessary standing
21	alone is not enough to justify the use of force?
22	MS. MILLER: Same objection.
23	But you can answer.
24	A. Yeah. I believe it has to be looked into.
25	Yeah. There's times that it wouldn't be justified.

```
1
    BY MR. KAHN:
 2
               So I guess the question -- the question is
    is whether the -- whether an officer's subjective
 3
 4
    belief alone, meaning that is all that is being
 5
    considered -- so an officer's subjective belief is not
6
    enough standing alone to justify the use of force.
 7
    that -- is that an accurate statement?
8
               MS. MILLER:
                            Objection.
               But you can answer.
9
10
               As long as it's reasonable. As long as, you
         Α.
11
    know, the force seems reasonable, it's -- I mean, I
12
    guess that's the only way to say it could be
13
    justified. It has to be reasonable.
14
    BY MR. KAHN:
15
               The decision to use force has to be
          O.
16
    reasonable under an objective standard. Correct?
17
               MS. MILLER:
                            Objection.
18
               But you can answer.
19
         Α.
               I'm not sure I understand -- you'd have to
20
    rephrase it or repeat it.
    BY MR. KAHN:
21
22
         Q.
               Sure. I'll try repeating it once, and then
23
    I can rephrase it if it's a bad question.
24
               The decision to -- a police officer's
25
    decision to use force must be reasonable under an
```

**Donald Vickers** 

Exhibit D 10/21/2020

1 objective standard. Right? 2 Same objection. MS. MILLER: 3 But you can answer. 4 Yeah. I wouldn't know how to answer that Α. 5 one. 6 BY MR. KAHN: 7 Q. I'm so sorry. What did you say? 8 I wouldn't know how to answer -- I wouldn't Α. 9 know how to answer that one. 10 Well -- all right. When you're taught on Q. 11 the use of force at the police academy, are you taught 12 the distinction between subjective belief and 13 objective belief of reasonableness? 14 Α. Yes. 15 And so what is your understanding of the 16 distinction between a subjective belief that force is 17 necessary and an objective belief that force is 18 necessary? 19 So if you're saying -- I don't know. 20 guess if you want to rephrase it. Is if -- if the officer believes so doesn't necessarily mean it's so 21 22 and doesn't mean that a reasonable person would do the 23 same. I don't know. 24 Q. That's exactly what it means. 25 That doesn't make it right. I --Α.

**Donald Vickers** 

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1 So that's a perfect way of saying it. Ο. 2 just because an officer believes that it's necessary 3 doesn't mean that a reasonable person believes it's 4 necessary. Right? 5 That's right. Α. 6 Ο. And then --7 Α. Yeah. 8 So in order for your use of force against Q. 9 Mr. Griffin to be deemed reasonable and not excessive, 10 it would have to be reasonable to -- from an objective 11 standard, which is different from just your personal 12 belief. Correct? 13 Okay. I think I can agree to that. Α. 14 MR. KAHN: Okay. All right. That's all I 15 have, unless you have anything more, Ms. Miller. 16 I just want to thank you, Officer Vickers, 17 for your time. We've been here for about four and a 18 half hours, and I know that this has probably not been 19 the way that you would like to spend a Wednesday 20 morning. And we do appreciate your time. 21 MS. MILLER: Thank you, SPO Vickers. 22 Nothing further. 23 THE WITNESS: Thank you, guys. 24 (DEPOSITION CONCLUDED AT 3:27 P.M.) 25 (Pursuant to Rule 30(e) of the Federal Rules

```
1
     of Civil Procedure and/or O.C.G.A. 9-11-30(e),
 2
     signature of the witness has been reserved.)
 3
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**Donald Vickers** 

1	The following reporter and firm disclosures						
	were presented at this proceeding for review by						
2	counsel:						
3	REPORTER DISCLOSURES						
4	The following representations and						
5	disclosures are made in compliance with Georgia Law, more specifically:						
6	Article 10(B) of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Court Reporting (disclosure forms) O.C.G.A. 9-11-28(c) (disqualification of						
7	reporter for financial interest)  O.C.G.A. 15-14-37(a) and (b) (prohibitions						
8	against contracts except on a case-by-case basis).  - I am a certified reporter in the state of Georgia.						
9	- I am a subcontractor for Pope Reporting & Video I have been assigned to make a complete and						
10	accurate record of these proceedings.  - I have no relationship of interest in the matter						
11	on which I am about to report which would disqualify me from making a verbatim record or						
12	maintaining my obligation of impartiality in compliance with the Code of Professional Ethics.						
13	- I have no direct contract with any party in this action and my compensation is determined solely by						
14	the terms of my subcontractor agreement.						
15	FIRM DISCLOSURES						
16	- Pope Reporting & Video was contacted to provide reporting services by the noticing or taking						
17	attorney in this matter.  - There is no agreement in place that is prohibited						
18	by O.C.G.A. 15-14-37(a) and (b). Any case-specific discounts are automatically applied						
19	to all parties at such time as any party receives a discount.						
20	- Transcripts: The transcript of this proceeding as produced will be a true, correct, and complete						
21	record of the colloquies, questions, and answers as submitted by the certified court reporter.						
22	- Exhibits: No changes will be made to the exhibits as submitted by the reporter, attorneys, or						
23	witnesses Password-Protected Access: Transcripts and						
24	exhibits relating to this proceeding will be uploaded to a password-protected repository, to						
25	which all ordering parties will have access.						

1	CERTIFICATE			
2	STATE OF GEORGIA:			
3	COUNTY OF COBB:			
4	I hereby certify that the total transcript,			
5	pages 1 through 171, represent a true, complete, and			
6	correct transcript of the proceedings taken down by me			
7	in the case aforesaid (and exhibits admitted, if			
8	applicable); that the foregoing transcript is a true			
9	and correct record of the evidence given to the best			
10	of my ability.			
11	The above certification is expressly			
12	withdrawn upon the disassembly or photocopying of the			
13	foregoing transcript, unless said disassembly or			
14	photocopying is done under the auspices of myself and			
15	the signature and original seal is attached thereto.			
16	I further certify that I am not a relative			
17	or employee or attorney of any party, nor am I			
18	financially interested in the outcome of the actions.			
19	This 30th day of October, 2020.			
20				
21				
22	Jennifer Davis-McLain, RMR, CRR, CRC, CCR-2496			
23	Georgia Certified Court Reporter			
24				
25				

Griffin vs. City of Atlanta Donald Vickers 10/21/2020

## VIA EMAIL

Date: 11/3/2020

To: Staci Miller, Esq.

Re: Signature of Deponent Donald Vickers

## Greetings:

The deponent has reserved the right to read and sign. Please have the deponent review the attached transcript, noting any changes or corrections on the attached Errata.

Once the Errata is signed by the deponent and notarized, please mail it to the offices of Pope Reporting (below).

When the signed Errata is returned to us, we will seal and forward to the taking attorney to file with the original transcript. We will also send copies of the Errata to all ordering parties.

If the signed Errata is not returned within the time below, the original transcript may be filed with the court without the signature of the deponent.

Date Errata due back at our offices: 12/10/2020

Please send completed Errata to: Pope Reporting & Video, LLC 2741 Pangborn Road Decatur, Georgia 30033 (404) 856-0966

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Griffin vs. City of Atlanta **Donald Vickers** 

		ERRATA		
JOB NUMBER: 18497				
I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have read the transcript of my testimony, and that				
	There are no changes noted The following changes are noted:			
Pursuant to Rule 30(7)(e) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and/or OCGA 9-11-30(e), any changes in form or substance which you desire to make to your testimony shall be entered upon the deposition with a statement of the reasons given for making them. To assist you in making any such corrections, please use the form below. If additional pages are necessary, please furnish same and attach.				
PAGE	LINE	CHANGE		
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REASON FOR CHA	NGE		
		DEPONE	NT'S SIGNATURE
Sworn to and subscribed before me this day of			
		,	
NOTARY PUBLIC			

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